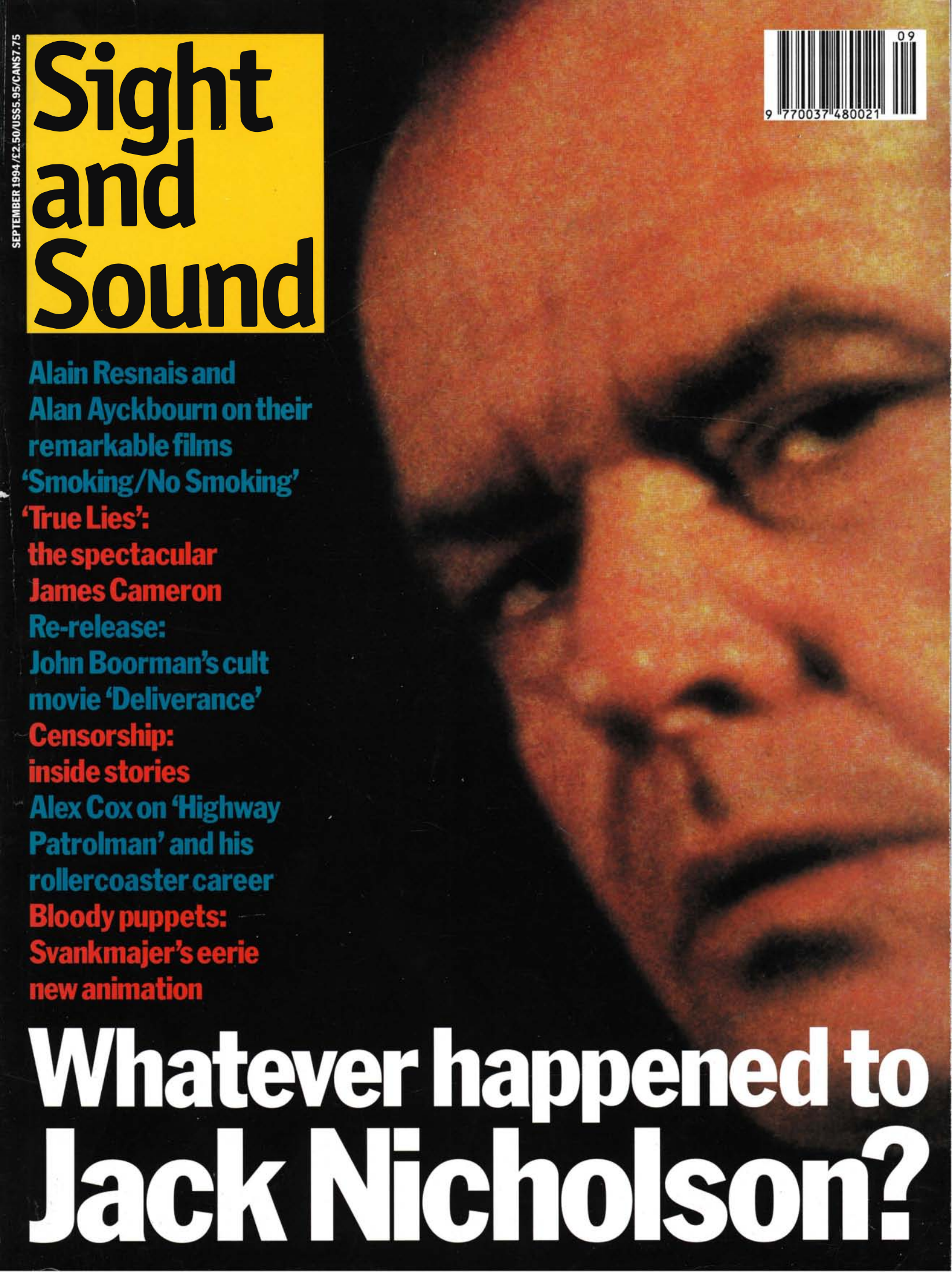
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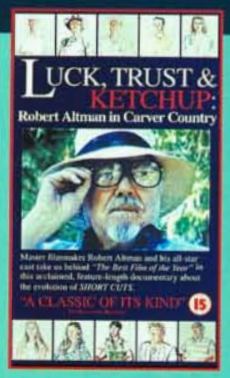
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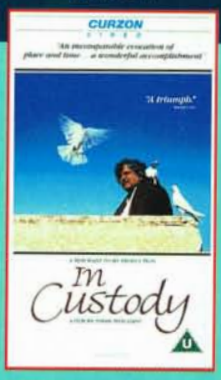
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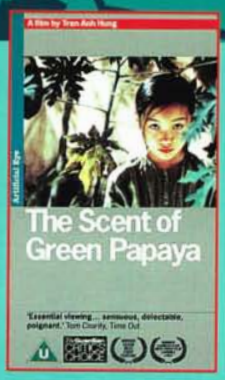
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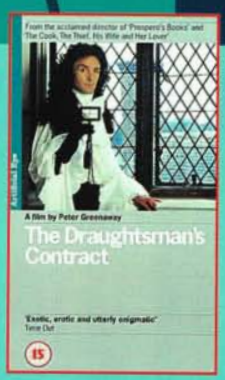
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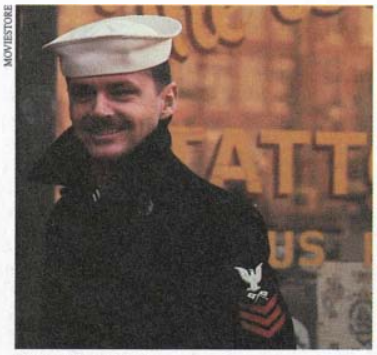
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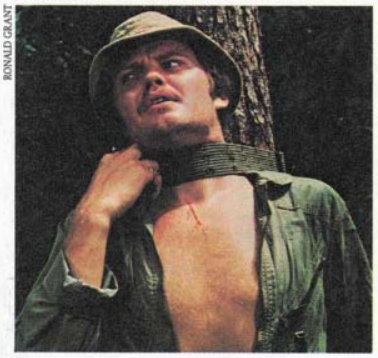
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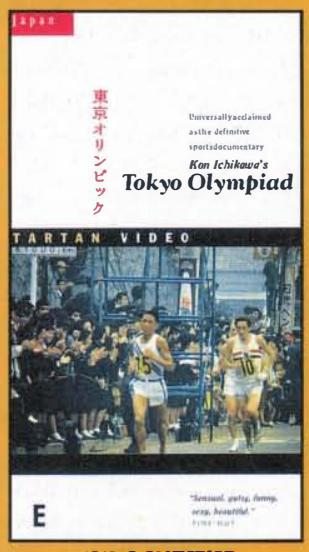
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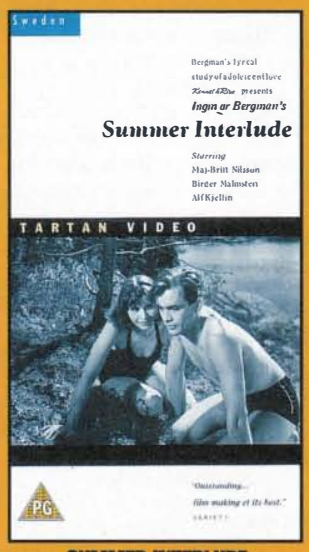
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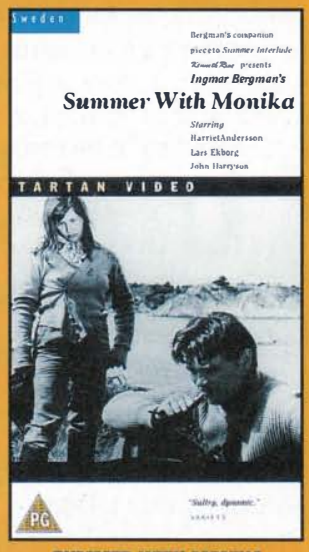




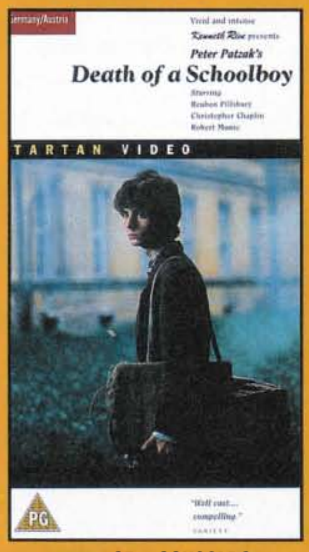
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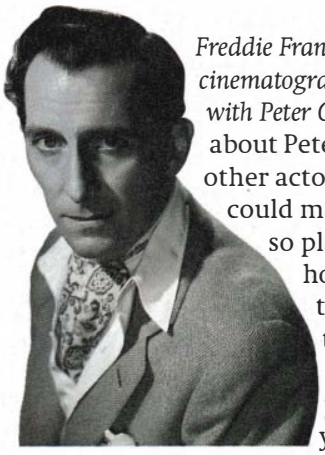
TARTAN VIDEO

In memory of

Peter Cushing

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Freddie Francis, director and cinematographer, remembers working with Peter Cushing The great thing about Peter is that there is no other actor in the world who could make nonsense sound so plausible. I've read horror scripts where I've thought, my God, there's two pages here of rubbish – but then you're shooting and you're listening to Peter and you're absolutely believing it. Hammer were the luckiest people in the world to be making films at a time when Peter and Chris Lee were around – you put those two guys into a horror film and you didn't need anything else. Why did they make such a great pair? Physically they were such opposites, they were great friends and they loved acting together – and they could easily hate each other on the screen without it impinging on their private lives. On those sorts of budgets and schedules, there wasn't much time to worry about how to light particular faces. The fact that they had the right sort of faces for those films was a big plus.

When I first met Peter many years ago, I didn't know his work. He had a tiny part in John Huston's *Moulin Rouge*, on which I was the camera operator; I met him subsequently a few years later when he had a part in a Joseph Losey film, which I photographed, *Time Without Pity*. He came across as a really lovely man, as well as a fine actor.

I went on to direct him in eight movies, the first of which was *The Evil of Frankenstein*. Peter took to the horror genre like a duck to water. I think he'd read what Boris Karloff had said – that he was typecast, and thank God he was. Peter took everything terribly seriously and was absolutely dedicated. He cared as much about these strange parts in horror films as he would have done about playing Hamlet.

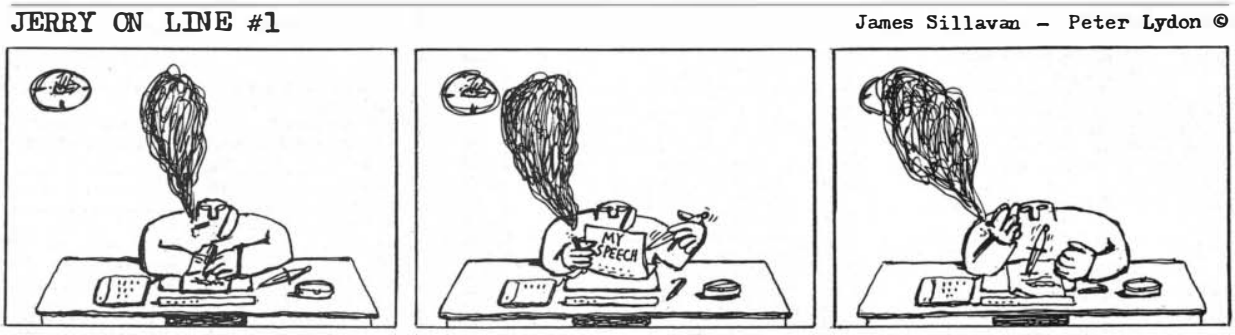
As for his image as the consummate Englishman, I didn't know Peter when he was in Hollywood, but I think it may have started there. There was nothing false about Peter, but I think as a professional he realised that it would help his career worldwide if he became that sort of an Englishman. Everything else came naturally, but this one thing I think he worked on.

One of my best memories of him is the last time I saw him – someone asked me if I'd do a documentary on him, and I went down to see him in Whitstable. By this time he was very, very ill, but the moment he saw the camera crew, he became a different person. Suddenly he was on his bike, cycling around like mad. It was true professionalism.

Peter missed his wife Helen very much when she died, and was always saying he was waiting to be back with her. Whenever Peter and I did a film together, we'd have a meeting that was almost a ritual – he'd come from Whitstable by train, and we'd have tea together at the Charing Cross Station Hotel. The first time I met him there after Helen had died, he looked in a terrible state. We were speaking about a part he was playing in *Tales from the Crypt*, and funnily enough, it was the part of a widower. He asked me if he could call his wife in the film Helen; I agreed, and I asked if, in the scene where he talks to her photograph, he'd like a picture of Helen. This cheered him up no end. And I think there is a shot in the movie of him talking to Helen's photograph.

I'm a great believer in the idea of the right bloke at the right time. I think if Peter hadn't been around, they'd have found someone else who had the right look, but they wouldn't have had that extraordinary breadth of experience. Very few people remember that he was in *Moulin Rouge*, but anybody seeing him in it would have thought he would turn out to be a romantic lead. Things went another way, but he never regretted it – let's face it, he had a lovely life and a lovely career. But I do hope he is remembered as an actor, and not just for Hammer horror.

Born 26 May 1913; died 11 August 1994



'Hudsucker' and 'Four Weddings'... after 'Santa Sangre'... Europe's jet-setting circus...

The business

●There are few things more depressing than a small film industry trying to pretend it can play on the same pitch as the big boys. Australia had a go in the mid-80s, using all kinds of dodgy tax schemes to bolster the belief that if you spent millions of dollars on a film with a bit of action and a few stars, you couldn't fail. Anyone reading this remember *The Lighthorsemen* or *Great Expectations: The Australian Story*?

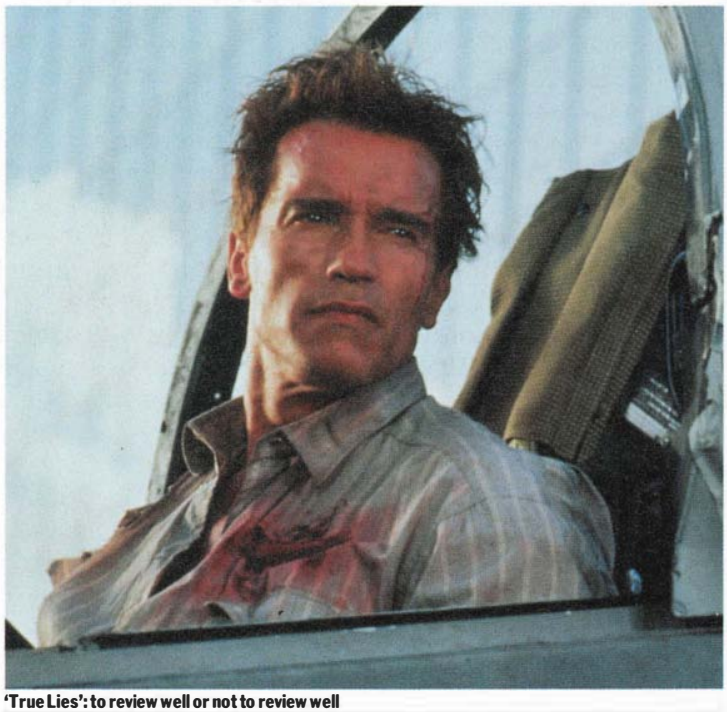
From time to time, European countries also try to make what look like American films but aren't. The Dutch had a go at the turn of the decade, with such turkeys as *Wings of Fame*, *The Last Island* and *Shadoman*, whose combined paying public would barely have filled (and would have had more fun on) a National Express coach. And in one memorable incident, the Italians spent a million dollars hiring a major US star to share billing with a local lad in an English-language film, only to find that the US star in question – Walter Matthau – only had "marquee value" if he was co-starring with Jack Lemmon.

Latest and most depressing convert to the (supposed) brave new world of commercial cinema is New Zealand, which recently cancelled the sales remit of its Film Commission, telling producers they should either sell their own films or, better still, enter into pre-sales arrangements with foreign (probably US) sales companies. Mucking up the film industry seems rather insignificant alongside such other recent achievements of the NZ government as dismantling the world's oldest and most effective health service and cutting pension and unemployment benefits back to levels that make Britain's Tories look generous. But I would make the following observations:

1. The marketing department of the NZFC, under the estimable Lindsay Shelton, was one of the most cost-efficient operations in the spendthrift business of film, building up a sales track record for small titles that no European country could equal.

2. The most recent example of a NZ production company entering into partnership with a US-based sales outfit resulted in a film called *The Last Tattoo*, starring Kerry Fox (of *An Angel at My Table*), Rod Steiger and Tony Goldwyn (the bad guy in *Ghost*), which had its budget suddenly cut on the eve of shooting and is, in the opinion of those who saw it in Cannes, all-but unreleasable.

3. In Europe, where state film bodies that sell as well as promote films are the exception, every small film institute and commission has repeatedly argued that the money spent on promotion could be more effectively used in helping to sell the films as well, since the percentages are such that very few independent sales companies are interested in handling them. The two most recent converts to sales as well as promotion are Denmark and Norway, which have similar population figures – 5.1 million and 4.1 million respectively – to New Zealand's 3.2 million.



'True Lies': to review well or not to review well

Whoever thought we would have to get used to the idea of Andrew Lloyd Webber as victim? That, however, has been the general tone of British reports covering the dispute between the West End's Mr Catchy-Tune and fading US star Faye Dunaway, after Sir Andrew dumped her, before she even opened, from the lead in the Los Angeles production of 'Sunset Boulevard', where she was due to replace Glenn Close. Miss Dunaway is currently sueing and is unlikely to be impressed by open letters in the 'Evening Standard'.

But the biggest battle the composer will face as a result of his decision will be his attempts to persuade the investors in the LA production that they shouldn't start asking for their money back. By the time it was shut down, the LA 'Sunset Boulevard' had returned only 15 per cent of its capitalisation.

Dunaway, meanwhile, has reportedly turned down an offer of a guest (voice) spot on 'The Simpsons'. She would have played a nightclub singer from whom a member of the audience requests 'Don't Cry for Me, Argentina', only to be told that the singer doesn't do Lloyd Webber songs.

● Nor, by the way, does Oliver Stone. Not any more, anyway. Contrary to reports on these pages in August, Stone's movie version of *Evita!* is now off for precisely the same reasons that his Noriega biopic was cancelled: the producers (Cinergi and Hollywood Pictures) and Stone were unable to agree on a budget. *Evita!* the movie would apparently have cost in excess of the originally planned $50 million, and neither side thought it was viable at more than that.

Nothing to do, I'm sure, with the fact that Stone's last epic, the turgid *Heaven & Earth*, took less than $6 million at the North American box office.

There has been little mention of the US trade paper 'Variety' on these pages recently – a little unfairly, since the paper's reviews record (one of the things criticised here last year) has improved enormously. However, a recent (18 July) piece by the paper's editor, Peter Bart, prompts Mr Busy to return to the fray.

A couple of years ago, Bart briefly suspended the chief reviewer on 'Variety', Todd McCarthy, after complaints from a major studio about a hostile review he had written of one of its major movies. Understandably, there was a fair amount of hoo-ha at the time, since McCarthy's record as a reviewer is second to none. Anyway, he was soon reinstated and continued to say what he thought about films, so one assumed that Bart had done the honourable thing and told the studios that if they wanted good reviews, they should make better films.

Recently, however, another 'Variety' reviewer, Brian Lowry, laid into the new Schwarzenegger movie, 'True Lies', with some gusto, calling it "overlong, overproduced and over budget". Worse still, he compared it to 'Last Action Hero', which, in Hollywood-speak, is tantamount to saying the film would bomb. 'True Lies' was better, admitted Lowry, but not enough to redeem Arnie at the box office.



Andie MacDowell in 'Four Weddings'

As it turned out, Lowry was wrong. The new film took nearly $30 million in its first four days – not quite 'Jurassic Park' figures, but pretty redemptive for Arnie all the same. But between Lowry's review (11 July) and the film's opening (15 July), 'Variety' seems to have taken fright, since Bart devoted his weekly 'Back Talk' column to saying that he thought 'True Lies' was "a helluva lot of fun".

Whether or not there was any telephone activity between 'Variety' and Fox (who funded and released the film) there is no way of knowing.

● *True Lies*, which cost somewhere over $100 million, began shooting on 26 August last year and was reportedly hard put to make its opening date this July. It is, therefore, reassuring to report on a film by a name director with an all-star cast and produced by an offshoot of a major studio (the Disney-owned Miramax) that took only three days to shoot and was made from an improvised script.

The film is called *Blue in the Face*. It was directed by Wayne Wang – a fairly mainstream film-maker since *The Joy Luck Club* – and it stars Roseanne Arnold, Harvey Keitel, Lily Tomlin, Michael J. Fox, Giancarlo Esposito, John Lurie and Jim Jarmusch. The idea apparently came up during the shooting of Wang's latest film, *Smoke*, which stars Keitel, Forest Whitaker and William Hurt, and the prospect of making an improvised movie was seductive enough to lure the aforementioned performers.

Arnold plays the wife of the owner of the shop in the main film (*Smoke*) who wants the shop's manager (Keitel) to run away with her to Las Vegas. Miramax will be releasing both films.

The August issue of 'Sight and Sound' contained a fortuitous juxtaposition of the cover (featuring the Coen Brothers) and the controversy over the review of 'Four Weddings and a Funeral', which continued to bubble on the letters page. The connection between the two films may not be immediately obvious. But, in the days when 'Four Weddings' was just another British film with a middle-range cast and some chance of an art-house success, the Coens' 'Hudsucker Proxy' was shaping up to be one of 1994's big-budget hits. So sales company Manifesto (which has since become PolyGram International) hit on the clever idea of offering the two as a package. If you wanted the big one, you'd have to take the little one too.

What that meant in practice was that buyers paid a lot for 'Hudsucker', which has performed poorly almost everywhere, and very little for 'Weddings', which could well end up in Europe's overall Top Five (not just

its independently released Top Five) for 1994. In France, for instance, it is already the most popular film overall this year. Funny old world.

● Now here's an idea for a movie to rival *Woodstock: The Director's Cut*, at any rate as far as Age-of-Aquarius credentials go. It all started as yet another of those ideas that Fellini never quite managed to get round to making.

The project is called *Viaggio a Tulum* (*Journey to Tulum*), and it has been resurrected by Italian producer Claudio Argento for maverick Chilean director Alejandro Jodorowsky, who hasn't made a film since the surrealistically bloody *Santa Sangre* in 1988. *Viaggio a Tulum* is the story of the search for the American Indian mystic who featured in Carlos Castaneda's hippie manual, *The Teachings of Don Juan, or the Yaqui Way of Knowledge*.

For those readers too young to recall the work, what DJ's teaching basically amounted to was chew a lot of peyote and fly with the birds. Unaware until now of Fellini's interest in magic mushrooms, Mr Busy begins to see certain of the more bizarre moments of *il maestro*'s later works, notably *City of Women*, in a new light.

Here's another film to add to the comeback trail I mentioned last month. It's called 'A Horse for Mr Barnum', it's been around for almost as long as Mr Busy has been in the business, and it's finally due to roll in Spain this month.

What makes the film interesting is that it will be the first feature in three decades from Western legend Budd Boetticher, who turned 78 in July. Apart from Bruce Boxleitner and Spanish star Assumpta Serna, most of the others involved in the film are of a similar vintage. The producer is Burt Kennedy (71), and the two main stars are Robert Mitchum (77) and James Coburn (a youthful 66).

● Not many S&S readers, I am sure, will be familiar with the frenzied world of the Travelling Cinematic Eurocrat (TCE). The key element in this jet-setting circus is the European Union's MEDIA organisation. By the way, the name does not, as some have suggested, stand for Measures to Encourage the Development of Ingenious Acronyms, but for Mesures pour Encourager le Développement



Airborne again: Budd Boetticher

des Industries Audiovisuelles. They manage to make it work in English, too, but I've forgotten how.

At any given moment of the year, a sizeable number of TCEs will be winging round the continent at the European taxpayer's expense to meet here, lunch there and draft a report somewhere else. An associate of Mr Busy's recalls turning up at the airport of a capital city somewhere in northern Europe for a flight to Brussels and identifying six separate TCEs on the same flight. Sooner or later, of course, the TCEs' meet-and-lunch timetable was bound to get overextended. Well, it happened with a vengeance this month.

Thanks to the same lack of consultation that results in the gas board digging up your road one week, the water company the next and BT the third, the Festival du Film Britannique de Dinard, the Dutch Film Days in Utrecht and the EuroAIM conference in Babelsberg all ended up being scheduled on the same weekend. As a result, the Dutch Film Days has had to cancel its planned Holland-UK 'Film Meeting', since all the delegates who had promised to attend from the UK are now going to be wined and dined in Dinard. And the Babelsberg get-together looks like happening without key delegates from France, the Netherlands and the UK.

Mr Busy's only comment is that, if all the people involved in attending, organising and addressing one another were put together in a cinema, it would probably make the difference between break-even and deficit on at least one European film.

LOCARNO NOTES

Tashlin and other pleasures

Marco Müller, its director, claims that the Locarno festival is "Europe's biggest public event"; and he is probably right, given the multiplication: on 12 successive nights, up to 8,000 paying, trusting spectators pack the Piazza Grande. They see not just the obvious pullers like *That's Entertainment III*, *Pulp Fiction* and John Milius' *Motorcycle Gang*, but more demanding works by Kieślowski, Egyptian director Youssef Chahine and the Iranian Abbas Kiarostami.

That, at least, is the theory: this year, however, tropical rain storms repeatedly washed shows out – to the financial peril of the festival, which is unusual in aiming to recoup 25 per cent of its budget from the box office.

Locarno's most successful competitive films seemed often to be those in which directors from the impoverished (that is, non-Hollywood) cinemas manage to equate subject, individual experience, script and style with the economy of the industry in which they are working. Christine Carrière's *Rosine* succeeds totally and unpretentiously in evoking the sad suburbs of a provincial town and the traumas of messy family life that assault its adolescent heroine. Fridrik Thor Fridriksson's *Movie Days* is also an unsophisticated and wonderfully evocative recollection of youth – in Iceland in the early 60s. The shock impact of the movies on the young hero, and the depiction of family occasions (sing-songs and a funeral) have an odd resonance with the images of Terence Davies.

Iranian cinema is in a fruitful period. Kiarostami's *Under the Olive Trees* already enjoyed critical success in Cannes; Ebrahim Foruzesh's *The Jar* is a work of inspired, fable-like simplicity; Kianoush Ayari's *The Abadanis* is perhaps too slavish in its homage to *Bicycle Thieves*, but its adaptation of De Sica's characters, style and story to the life of war refugees living in the wastelands of Tehran has an interesting political dimension of its own.

At the time of writing, the major Asian films, Locarno's speciality, were still to come. From Hong Kong, however, Wong Kar-Wai's *Chungking Express* is as refreshing as it is startling. Using a hand-held camera, break-neck editing, witty players and the chaotic maze of the Chungking House commercial complex, the director expands upon the free-fall romantic adventures of two young cops with woman trouble. The only Japanese film on show was Kazuo Hara's *A Dedicated Life*, an original and fascinating reportage on the final years of the controversial novelist and socio-sexual dissident Misuharu Inoue. While unsparingly tracking Inoue's battle with terminal cancer, Hara also follows the divergent routes of his autobiography and the known facts of his early life.

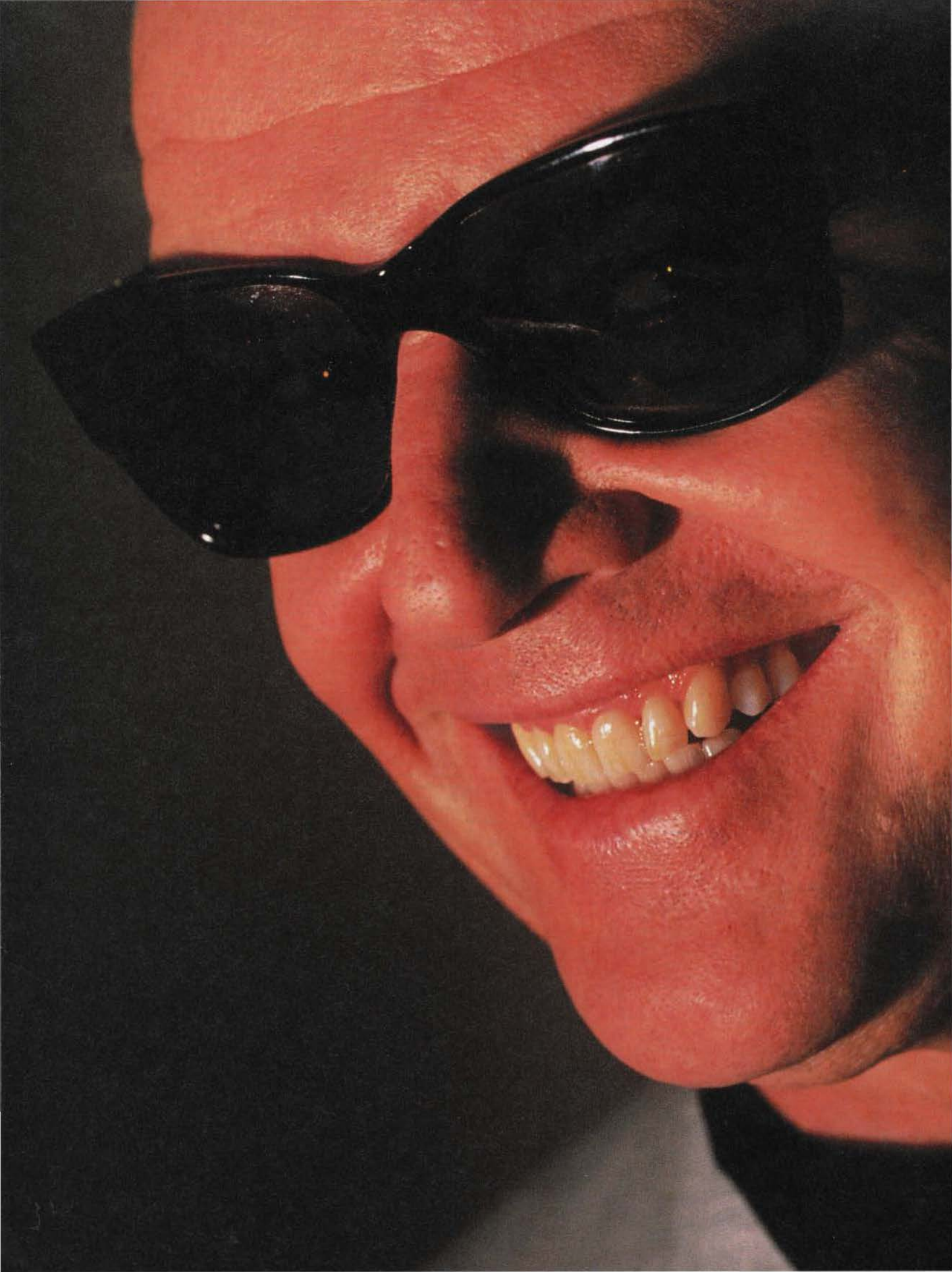
Locarno is good at retrospectives. Last year provided a marvellous



rehabilitation of Sacha Guitry; this year was the second coming of Frank Tashlin. Since his retrospective at the 1973 Edinburgh Film Festival, Tashlin's reputation has been allowed to languish. He suffered, no doubt, from the demands of the French critics' *politique des auteurs*, which asked that devotees love the total *oeuvre* with impartial loyalty. But if we may now admit, for instance, that *The Alphabet Murders* (which he made at MGM Borehamwood) is awful, and that *The Disorderly Orderly* is hardly the pivotal work it looked in 1973, the best of Tashlin seems even more rewarding in our comedy-starved days.

Locarno's coup was a sizeable selection of the 60 or so animated films on which Tashlin worked, generally as supervisor, between 1932 and 1946. It is fascinating to find gags from the feature comedies predicated in the cartoons: ideas in *Cinderella Goes to a Party* (1942) turn up in *Cinderfella* (1960); while Tashlin was already slipping sexual ambiguity (*I Got Plenty of Mutton*) and bawdy (the cold in *The Home Front* is "enough to freeze the nuts off a Jeep") past the Hays Office. Already, as Tashlin told Peter Bogdanovich, there was "nothin' more hysterical to me than big-breasted women – like walking leaning towers".

As a master of physical comedy, an apprenticeship in animation gave him – as it did Gregory La Cava before him and Terry Gilliam after – an unfettered sense of the image and a surrealist comic vision. Surprisingly, the aspect of Tashlin that now seems more apparent than it did two decades ago is his satire – his comic exasperation at "the nonsense of what we call civilisation". The ridicule of advertising in *Will Success Spoil Rock Hunter?*, of space-age mania and Cold War paranoia in *The Glass Bottom Boat*, of Korean heroics in *The Geisha Boy*, of the medical business in *The Disorderly Orderly*, of sexual immaturity and of consumerism in every film, is startlingly fresh and fierce. Bogdanovich, citing Feydeau's reflection that good comedy writers "think sad first", reckoned Tashlin "among the saddest of men; he seemed personally injured by the ugliness in the world, disappointed and dismayed by it". When mixed with wild hilarity, such disappointment and dismay still prove wonderfully heady. *David Robinson*





FRANK W OCKENFELS 3/OUTLINE/KATZ

SISYPHUS IN RAY-BANS

From 'Easy Rider' to 'Wolf', Jack Nicholson has been one of Hollywood's icons. Does he deserve the praise lavished on him? By Ian Penman

In *Wolf* – the latest instalment of the Jack Nicholson story – there's what the film's makers probably think is a defining moment. Jack's middle-aged executive has just been given the sack at a country house party. The first warning shoots of his imminent wolfdom are sprouting and he rests up in a woodland clearing. A thick, unbecoming patina of sweat has broken out all over his pouchy, porcine face: he is already a *human* monster of grey skin and dead eyes. You think – as you're meant to think – that perhaps at last Nicholson is going to drop all that Jack the Lad stuff and play his age; give us a glimpse of that picture he must keep in his Beverly Hills attic.

Out of nowhere steps Michelle Pfeiffer: a glowing, golden portent of feminine benevolence. She voices the audience's thoughts:

Pfeiffer: Old guy, huh?

Nicholson: [wearily] Yeah: *old guy*.

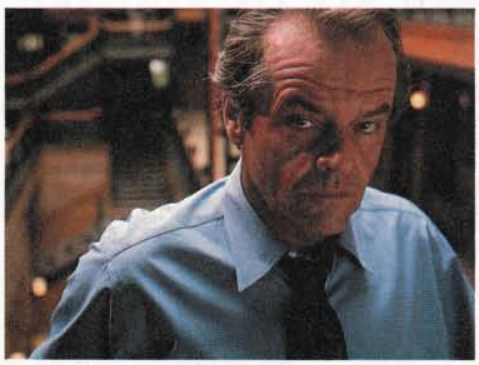
Not *King Lear* perhaps, nor meant to be, but it is the sort of defining moment – of sarcastic revelation, of prickly self-knowledge – that Nicholson's reputation rests upon. No one, the story goes, could elongate that "yeah" just so. Nicholson shows us oblique, nocturnal glimpses of the masculine self, while always remaining his own charming and charmed self. Whatever foul black shades he has to go through, he's still Jack: this is what he does, what he's paid for – the Jack Act.

But if these defining moments were once simply the most memorable scenes from a substantial body of work, now they often seem to constitute all that remains of the work: a few moments of italicised lucidity propping up indifferent movies, weak echoes of a once daring presence. *Wolf*, for instance, has a feeble erotic charge, and doesn't even begin to have the courage of its concept – the power to unsettle our sexual depths that distinguishes the *Alien* series, Schrader's *Cat People* or Cronenberg's *The Fly*. Perhaps not surprisingly, given director Mike Nichols' track record, it's really just a New York office-politics comedy (like *Working Girl*) with the hair-raising concept pasted on afterwards like so much tacky prosthetics. Its message turns out to be that it's not so much the archetypal wolf that all us saggy, disenchanted guys have to find within ourselves – it's Jack. Each man needs to find a bit of the satyric Everyman in himself, and – it goes without saying – Nicholson is our age's leading candidate for the post: Jack the Id.

The 'old guy' scene will no doubt be used in the profiles of Nicholson that accompany each new piece of Jack action. And it will work in his favour that he now has an elder statesman scene or two in his CV (see also, *A Few Good Men*) to balance the suspicion that in his private life he behaves like he's still 19 – like the world has just opened its arms (OK: legs) wide and he can't say no. Yet *Wolf* is never interesting for what it might have to say about masculinity or heterosexuality or mid-life crisis in the 90s: it's only interesting negatively in its evasion of all such questions. You can't imagine the Jack Nicholson of the 70s cropping up in such a movie – and it only remains to sort out how much that is a comment on Nicholson and how much a reflection of the current state of Hollywood.

Nicholson's work in the 70s brewed up a perhaps never-to-be-repeated blend of American sass (B-movie brio) and hijacked 'European' sensibility (art movie attitudes): *Five Easy Pieces*, *Carnal Knowledge*, *The King of Marvin Gardens*, *Chinatown*, *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (not to mention his one genuine Euro movie, Antonioni's *The Passenger*). It used to be that there was a divide between this kind of film and the kind where a hirsute He-Devil chows down on the fingers of a young black mugger. But during the 80s these polar strands merged into a middle-ground cinema that ultimately supplies none of the pleasures of either genre. From *The Shining* to *The Witches of Eastwick* to *Wolf*, the FX got bigger but the artistic dividends got smaller. Where once we had an actor who bequeathed American cinema a new psychic geography, now we had King Leer, a kind of aesthetically correct Benny Hill. (Who else does his ludicrous bawdy mugging in films such as *Goin' South* and *The Witches of Eastwick* remind you of?)

During the 80s Nicholson transmuted from Jack the Lad to Jack the Ad: he stopped putting his all into movie acting and started putting ▶



Lost in a wood: Nicholson as the crisis-ridden executive in 'Wolf'

◀ his energy into interviews. In the pages of *Vanity Fair* and *Rolling Stone* he vilified the new sleek-but-empty package deals of Hollywood, the hypocrisies of censorship, the reliance on fantasy and violence over emotion and eroticism. But when it came to his own work, he was all fanfare and no follow-through. The celebrity persona had overtaken the once economical actor, and when he appeared in cartoon face-paint for his role as The Joker in *Batman*, it was only a belated acknowledgment of what he had already become: a caricature of eyebrows, grin, devilish hauteur.

His name has always been a gift to pun-happy headline-writers, but now it's getting to the point where you wonder if the film roles aren't picked to accommodate the puns: Wolfman Jack, Joker Jack, and so on. He even began to act in headlines, his performances erupting in five-minute bursts, momentarily revving up the film only to leave it looking drained and dowdy when he exits. The weaker the film, the stronger he appears.

If *Easy Rider* was the film which transformed Nicholson from a not-so-young (he was 32 upon its release in 1969) counterculture jack-of-all-trades into Hollywood's Jack in the Box, then *The Shining*, the film with which he began the 80s, was his second pivotal role, elevating him in the eyes of the public from a likeable eccentric presence into a movie institution. *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (1975) should have been the film to do it, but between that and *The Shining* came only *The Missouri Breaks* (1976), a cameo in the inert *The Last Tycoon* (1976) and the miscalculated goof of *Goin' South* (1978). *The Shining* was a watershed not in industry terms (like *Easy Rider* or *Cuckoo's Nest*), but in its inauguration of a caricature persona as the distinguishing mark of the 'new' Nicholson.

His work in *Five Easy Pieces*, *Marvin Gardens*, *The Passenger* and *Chinatown* was relatively low key: these films all reflected the site of 70s masculinity as a spoor of doubt, confusion, ambivalence, dead ends. Masculinity was shown to be in a state of suspension and flux, caught between old sureties and new demands, old ideals and new realities. *Chinatown* was especially ingenious in the way it scattered 70s doubt through a quintessential Hollywood genre. It also (like *Five Easy Pieces*) sculpted a new kind of sexiness out of louche existential perplexity; it made alienation an offer you couldn't refuse. All us (white) Neurotic Boy Outsiders now had someone on-screen to flesh out the ideas in our Penguin Modern Classics: Sisyphus in Ray-Bans.

In retrospect, *Goin' South* shows that Nicholson had already begun to lose his sense of perspective: he takes every opportunity to go completely over the top; his raggedy-ass outlaw Henry Moon can't even ride a horse without girning. "Don't do that," says Mary Steenburgen, as if speaking for the audience during one such display, "*you're acting foolishly*." Quite so. This could have been put down to Nicholson the fiendish director letting Nicholson the frenzied actor get away with unchecked mayhem; but *The Shining* proved no better. Stanley Kubrick was apparently so preoccupied with flashy camerawork and a maze of opaque metaphysical meanings that he didn't notice that Nicholson seemed to have placed a bet with himself to see how high up the screen he could project his eyebrows. *The Shining* was a big film in every way, and Nicholson tried to fill the (in)human vacuum of Kubrick's vision with his most unrelieved mugging yet. As in *Goin' South*, he didn't change gears up into mania – he started out screwloose and just got louder.

One of the defences proffered by people who liked the film (or were cowed by its pedigree) was: you've missed the point, it was *meant* to be black comedy. As it happens, this particular brand of special pleading can be applied to most of Nicholson's work in the 80s: everything he did became infected by undisciplined farcical/facial comedy (his overrated Charley Partanna in *Prizzi's Honour* was like a dimwit comedian's Godfather impersonation; his Devil in *The Witches of Eastwick* came on like the Tasmanian Devil in designer duds; in *Hoffa*, his mocked-up fizzog made him look like one of the Three Stooges). He worked more and more for directors such as James Brooks and Mike Nichols, friends like Rafelson and DeVito, all of whose work epitomised the new middle-ground Hollywood: by turns glossy, gargantuan, fussy, self-regarding – and always disappointingly risk-free.

Slow-burn sneer to animated rage

Ironically only *Terms of Endearment* (1983) – a contemporary 'woman's picture' – comes anywhere near to saying anything convincing about the fateful life of a macho romantic. The character of Garrett Breedlove (a boozy ex-astronaut) follows something like a tangible psychological arc, and for once Nicholson's gift for tart, bilious comedy is put to good use. Even if the movie as a whole is a relentless tear-jerker, in some of the later scenes Nicholson gets suspiciously close to poignancy.

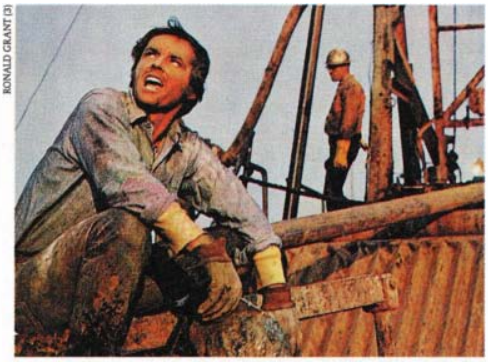
If a bit more work had been put into clarifying the muddy plot of *The Two Jakes* (1990) – the long-awaited follow-up to *Chinatown*, again scripted by Robert Towne and eventually directed by Nicholson himself – the film might have garnered more public and critical acclaim. It might even have proved the saving of Jack Nicholson – or at least of the Nicholson we think we remember from so long ago. For the first time in over a decade, Nicholson connects – using a character he not coincidentally first played in the 70s – with questions of identity, loss, ageing, melancholy and nostalgia. It is a jaded male sensualist's vision, in which – paradoxically – the feminine side of Nicholson is let out to play. Here at last we finally had an adult Jack Nicholson film, with adult themes (memory, obsession, redemption), adult acting, and a directorial tempo that recalled the golden age of 70s US cinema. But the film's troubled genesis seems to have exhausted Nicholson's patience with the directing/producing process and we'll never know what kind of turnaround a successful *Two Jakes* might have effected on his now terminally complacent sensibility.

So how did someone with such an inconsistent career come to be installed as everyone's idea of Mr Hollywood? (Robin Williams: "There's Jack and there's the rest of us."). Nicholson may be admired by the studios' men in suits for his financial acumen, but he has never been the kind of actor who consistently brings in the paying punters. Even during his golden period (1969-76) he was a financial minnow compared with Eastwood, Redford, even Burt Reynolds. He only got a whiff of their status in 1976, the year *Cuckoo's Nest* swept the Oscars.

But in the early 70s, Nicholson gave men a new kind of icon to measure themselves against. He combined the assured masculinity of old Hollywood father figures (from Bogart to Lee Marvin) with the antic hipster neurosis of a new generation (a style he'd developed largely unobserved in his low-budget work throughout the 60s, some of which – Richard Rush's *Hell's Angels On Wheels* and Monte Hellman's two existential Westerns *The Shooting* and *Ride in the Whirlwind* – bears repeated viewing). Nicholson's body – its crouch, its crablike motion, its swing from slow-burn sneer to animated rage – mirrored the new masculinity as a state of unreliable excess: fluid, mercurial, open to sudden change or transformation. Nothing was ever what it seemed. Bobby Dupea in *Five Easy Pieces* inhabits a world of bowling alleys, trailer parks, country and western bars – an archetypal low-rent American life – but turns out to be a European scion of an upper-middle-class family of classical musicians. In the novel of *The Last Detail*, the Shore Patrol wise-ass Buddusky is – like Nicholson himself – an autodidact, given to quoting Camus and Nietzsche. Likewise, Nicholson's seeming hayseed personae had roots in entirely other landscapes; he once admitted that the gormless flavour of his *Goin' South* performance was visualised after watching Herzog's favourite actor.

Nicholson's superstardom has always been balanced by the fact that he is far more like us than other stars – he is our everyguy *because* of his flaws: his beer belly and receding hairline; his leer and his slouch; the basketball and the 'babes'. He may have Picassos hanging on his walls, but he has managed to make us think of him as just another slob. His is not an unattainable perfection, like that of Warren Beatty or Robert Redford – all WASP assurance and aspiration, too handsome and reserved to be a mirror for us ordinary Jacks out in the audience. Nicholson's everyguy is a beer poppin', basketball applaudin', eyebrow-twitchin', belly-scratchin', nose-sniffin' kinda figure. Beatty's sexual persona is cool, calculated, replete with secret knowledge; Nicholson is all smacked lips and leer and lunge: in films like *Goin' South* and *The Witches of Eastwick*, eating, walking, talking all become acts of barely disguised sexual sublimation. Everything is set in perpetual twitchy motion – eyebrows, elbows, knees, lips, even his static-electricity shock of hair – and he can't stop the flow. Nothing interrupts the calm motion of actors like Redford, Beatty, Eastwood; Nicholson is all moments, irruptions, flashes: he doesn't quite join up.

As the 70s turned into the 80s, it became harder to separate the part from the player, their combined persona an amalgam made up of one part unreconstructed swinger (you can just picture the plush male modernist pad, jazz on the stereo, a salver of cocaine, omnipresent



RONALD GRANT (3)

Faces of Jack: the young player in 'Five Easy Pieces'



Jack's gleeful snarl in Kubrick's high-status 'The Shining'



Jack lost in the valley in 'Chinatown', above
Jack at his most parodic in 'Batman', below



chicks) and one part wandering hayseed (mirrored in his filmography of cowboys, Hells Angels, vulgar cigar-smoking army grunts and oil-riggers). Nicholson offered a compromise between nature and culture, between frontier yokel and Beverly Hills roué. And if Beatty is a WASP god, Nicholson is as black as Hollywood's white culture gets, with his echoes of the Joker/Riddler Coyote/Wolf figure of other cultures. By exposing his flaws, Nicholson ended up covering more bases: men liked him because he seemed to lack the more nauseating movie-star graces; women liked him because he looked permanently post-coital (one actress spoke in awe of how he managed to keep it up all night – his mad static burst of Stan Laurel hair, that is).

The words most used to describe Nicholson – especially in relation to his recent output – are terms like wicked, devilish or diabolical. But Nicholson's take on evil is the stuff of cartoon (which is why he was such a cert to play The Joker). Hollywood has never properly exorcised the spectre of Charles Manson from its collective subconscious, and this, I believe, has set up a vicious circle whereby it can't face up to real evil and so will never be rid of the ghost. Nicholson indulges the myth that America's marginal characters – its interstate loners and institutionalised idiot savants – are wicked, but lovably so. If you search his filmography you'll find a preponderance of duplicity, rogueishness, villainy (and a disturbing amount of rapes or near-rapes). But while he has never really challenged Tom Hanks, Robin Williams or Harrison Ford as the owner of an achey breaky heart, he has also never tested his lovably wicked image with anything genuinely disturbing or malevolent, as De Niro did with *Raging Bull* and *Once Upon a Time in America*, Keitel with *Bad Lieutenant*, or Hopper with *Blue Velvet*. The combined life/film persona of dandy, devilish Jack is too precious a commodity to risk with any real deconstruction. Nicholson has made of our interest in his 'private' self a protective shield behind which he gets away with second-rate or self-parodic work, unlike other actors who focus all interest (theirs and ours) on what they do on screen.

The more you study Nicholson's career, the more you are led to the conclusion that the supposed margins he once worked in were always just a new mainstream in waiting. Look at what he comes up with when he's given unlimited space (*Drive, He Said*, *Goin' South*) or what happens when a supposedly grand old team (Carole Eastman, Bob Rafelson, Nicholson) regroup, as for 1992's *Man Trouble*. Television programmers recently pitched *Goin' South* against *Aliens*: *Aliens* looked like a cinema of the future – multiracial, with strong roles for women and all manner of odd meanings and messages smuggled aboard its mainstream voyage; *Goin' South* looked less like some lost golden age than something we should be glad to say good riddance to – an egotistical, chummy male club of film-making, enfeebled (allegedly) by drugs and star-life tunnel vision.

In the shadows of the mainstream, Walken, Keitel and Hopper (not to mention other honourable long-distance actors such as Jeff Bridges and Gérard Depardieu) have built up a body of work which continues the legacy of the 70s without its dumber assumptions; work which destabilises the male image in cinema without dimming its power, without denying the pleasure of hetero male sexuality; work which makes Nicholson's phallocentric act look like the fears of a clown. What Nicholson has become should make us look more critically at our memory of what he once was. If once we viewed his pre-1980 work as the first flourish of a courageous developmental arc, we're now tempted to survey it for signs of imminent dodginess and dementia, ingrained puerility and immaturity. What we once might have found daring in *Drive, He Said*, *The King of Marvin Gardens*, *Five Easy Pieces* or *The Last Detail* may now look like the blueprint for self-indulgent attitudinising. As James Monaco put it in *American Film*: "The women are painfully stereotypical 'chicks', as they were in most BBS movies. The misogyny of the youth films is one of the major signs (that should have been clearer to more of us sooner) that they were on the whole artificially mythic constructions rooted in romantic bad faith rather than in the requisite understanding of the way we live now."

Nicholson vs Eastwood

From this point of view it is easy to see Nicholson as Mr Establishment, the personification of everything that is smug, spaced-out and falsely 'hip' about Hollywood. The real rebel in this scenario is someone like Clint Eastwood, who has used his position within the mainstream to back uncommercial projects such as *Tightrope*, *Bird* and *White Hunter, Black Heart*, or Nicholson's old buddy Dennis Hopper, whose most compromised work still contains more hunger, risk and verve than anything Nicholson has been involved in for a long time. As with *Wolf*'s evasion of the troubling depths of its chosen subject, Nicholson can be seen to symbolise not countercultural longevity but a certain generational cowardice. Like other once-daring avatars (The Rolling Stones, Hunter S. Thompson) Jack personifies the worst aspects of the 60s legacy: promiscuity without end, monogamy without commitment, drugs without enlightenment, a confused welter of sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll jargon masquerading as political ire, black culture ripped off and uncredited, hot air standing in for new artistic responses; all in all, a refusal to grow up and find new terms to live and work by.

Slipped into every hokey performance – in life as well as on screen – is some fleeting mnemonic flash that reminds us of how things used to be – as though he's winking at us, saying, "sure this is junk, but hey, I can get away with this, because after all I'm still Big Jack, and I'm bigger than any of this". But maybe he's done it once too often – that self-referential joke isn't funny any more – and like the women in his life, we come to a point where we in the audience say: "sorry Jack, grow up, pay up or bye bye: clowntime is over."

'Wolf' opens on 26 August and is reviewed on page 52 of this issue; Patrick McGilligan's 'Jack's Life: A Biography of Jack Nicholson' has recently been published by Hutchinson

RESNAIS

A French film-maker and an English comic playwright have collaborated on a remarkable pair of soon-to-be-released films. Alain Resnais and Alan Ayckbourn talk to Jonathan Romney

RULES OF THE GAME

Alain Resnais' diptych *Smoking/No Smoking* is theatrical cinema in the fullest sense of the term. The two films, designed to be seen side by side, in either order, are completely unlike 'filmed theatre' in the usual sense of stage drama artificially opened up through exterior locations. Instead, they flaunt their use of stage conventions and refuse outright all the tricks that film, as a matter of course, uses to make filmed drama easier for the viewer attuned to the language of cinematic naturalism. Two actors – Resnais regulars Sabine Azéma and Pierre Arditi – play nine parts between them, donning various disguises for a series of dialogues staged on a number of traditionally illusionistic sets (garden, golf course, churchyard). But there are no split-screens, no 'invisible' cuts, no exteriors – it's as if the phantom presence of the proscenium arch were hovering invisibly over the action.

There's nothing surprising in Resnais making theatrical cinema: *Smoking/No Smoking* follows on from his 1986 film *Mélo*, which explored dramatic conventions through an adaptation of Henry Bernstein's 1929 stage play. What's more surprising is Resnais' source material: *Intimate Exchanges*, a 1982 play cycle by that most irreducibly English of playwrights, Alan Ayckbourn. The author of 46 plays, Ayckbourn is often associated with a certain sort of middle-brow comedy, the theatrical equivalent of *Terry and June*. Yet this is largely a hangover from the West End success of early plays such as *Absurd Person Singular* and *How the Other Half Loves*. Increasingly over the last 20 years, Ayckbourn has shown himself to be as adventurous a formal experimenter as any of his contemporaries, and *Intimate Exchanges* is extreme by any standards. A crazy-paving garden of narrative, it begins with a choice of alternative actions (headmaster's wife Celia Teasdale wonders whether to smoke a cigarette), then forks out into a series of possibilities (Ayckbourn's 'map' of the play represents it as an inverted candelabra shape). Celia's first choice determines whether she has a scene with amorous gardener Lionel Hepplewick or school dignitary Miles Coombes. Each confrontation in turn precipitates another choice of paths, another permutation of characters in the two-hander scenes (always one male, one female – Celia and her husband Toby; Toby and punky *ingénue* Sylvie Bell; Sylvie and Miles; Miles and his wife Rowena). And each time, the characters' fates are irrevocably transformed in cavalier style – it's like an illustration of chaos theory enacted with a flip of a coin.

The original plays – with their 16 possible endings – were staged over several days on Ayckbourn's homeground, the Stephen Joseph Theatre in the Round in Scarborough. Resnais – with adaptors Jean-Pierre Bacri and Agnès Jaoui – has squeezed them all (bar two narrative branches) into two two-hour chunks.

Jonathan Romney: Both 'Smoking' and 'No Smoking' start with the words, "We're in England... In the heart of Yorkshire," accompanied by Floc'h's cartoon images of an idyllic landscape. As a piece of scene-setting, it's reminiscent of the famous stage direction in Jarry's 'Ubu Roi': "Poland. That is, nowhere."

Alain Resnais: On the one hand, you have to help the viewer to find a way in, and on the other, to accept that the actors speak French, and that there's nothing specifically English about it. Ayckbourn can be performed anywhere in the world because his characters share the feelings that all human beings do.

We worked above all on the characters. Pierre Arditi knew several of Ayckbourn's plays, and Sabine Azéma had wanted to put on *Sisterly Feelings* ten years ago, so they were steeped in his work. We often felt that the shadow of the master was with us, and we kept wondering, "how would he like this?" But he'd given us *carte blanche*. I only promised him one thing – "Give us the rights, and I won't call you and ask you to rewrite the opening to make it more cinematic, or to add new lines or new scenes. I don't want to make it more cinematic, it's precisely the theatrical aspect that interests me."

You agreed to lose two branches of the story – a pageant and a village cricket match. It changes the symmetry – but then you're not immediately aware of the symmetry while watching the film.

I didn't intend the viewer to follow the structure that closely – I wanted people to get lost in a sort of labyrinth, and enjoy it. I thought, if it works, then when you see the second film, whichever order you see them in, it should create a very particular pleasure – there will be the memory of the first one, which will provide a special enjoyment. Either that, or people will be irritated and not go and see the second one.

This current return to theatre goes even further than 'Mélo', which was already stretching the limits of how 'theatrical' a film could be.

When I was 14, I couldn't understand how I could be at the same time so moved by the films of Renoir and John Ford, and by the films of Sacha Guitry, which flaunted their theatricality from the outset. So I wanted to do theatre-cinema, which is not the same thing as filming plays. There's a fine difference. When you're feeling down, you might sometimes wonder, "What is this, are we just making television – where's the invention in it?" But it involves much more in the way of lighting, for example. What I like about it is that you could easily get the impression that there are only static shots, though in fact the camera never stops moving. You have to ask, "What is cinema? What is theatre? Are they really opposites or are they deeply intertwined?" I don't know the answers, but you can often see theatre in a film, in the acting, for example. I love Preston Sturges' films, which are acted like plays, and the same goes for Mankiewicz.

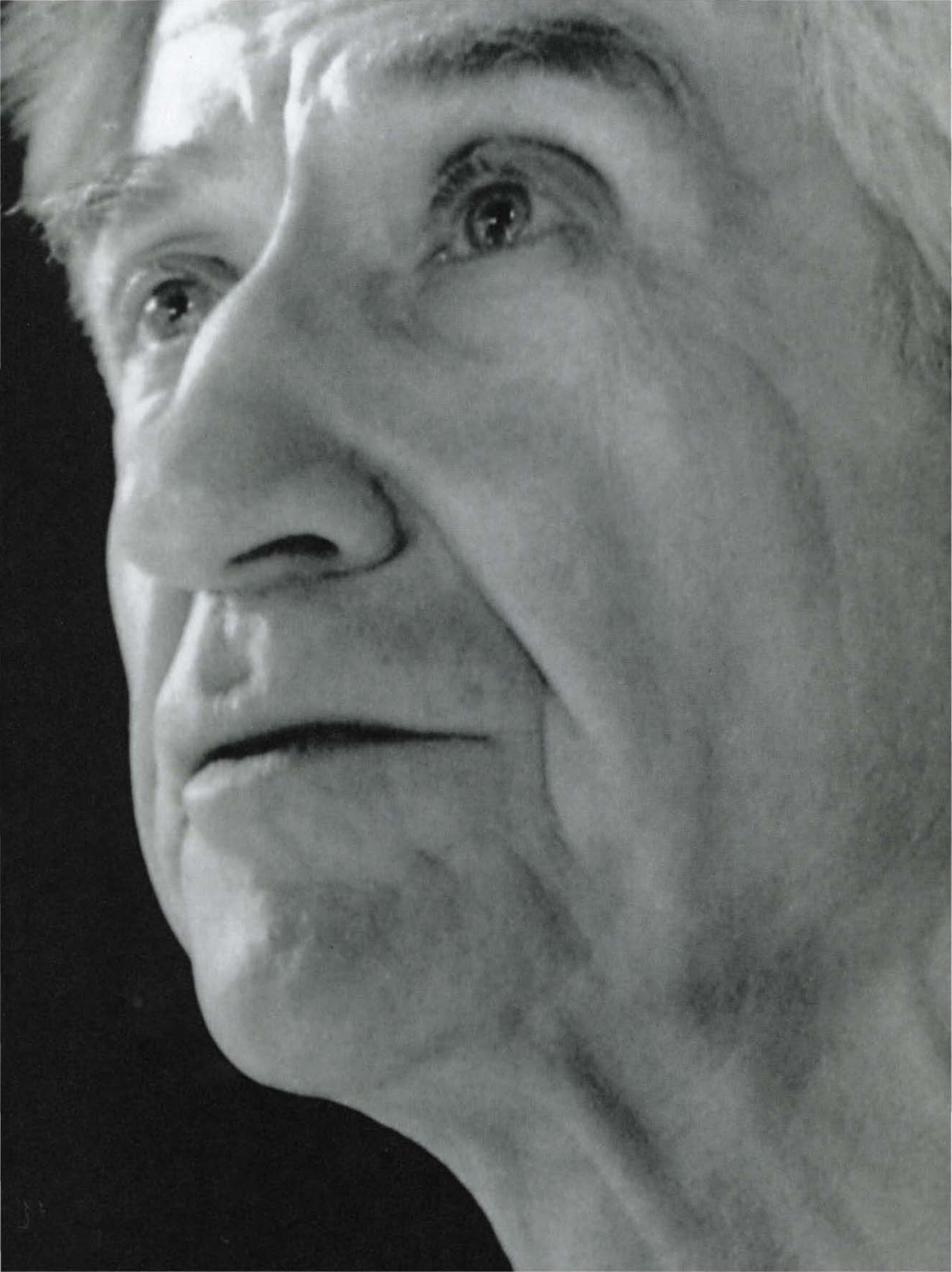
By starting with Floc'h's cartoon images of the characters, you are starting straight off with stereotypes. You've said that what you like about Ayckbourn is his way of "diverting" stereotypes.

Ayckbourn has a way of diverting stereotypical situations, of using slapstick. 'Pure' slapstick usually remains in the realm of the comic, but with him, you can have something tragic happen right in the middle of slapstick. In *Absurd Person Singular*, there's a scene where a man is left hanging on the end of a light fitting; his wife tries to help him and gets electrocuted herself. But then you realise that she's been taking barbiturates and trying to kill herself – and that changes everything. The important thing in Ayckbourn is that the actors should never act as if they're saying something funny. They have to play it absolutely straight. What you're saying might make people laugh, but you don't know that in advance.

Isn't the final effect depressing, to realise how much these characters are subject to invisible, deterministic forces? In this sense, the play takes us back to the theories of Henri Laborit, the behavioural scientist who provides the commentary in your film 'Mon Oncle d'Amérique'. But here the determining forces are no longer biological – we're dealing with chance.

When we were making the film, we were never able to work out whether things were hap- ▶

Stretching the limits: the 72-year-old Alain Resnais, a director who has never been content with just cinema, opposite





Garden of forking lives: Sabine Azéma and Pierre Arditi as Celia Teasdale and Miles Coombes in 'No Smoking'

◄ pening because of a character's psychology, or because of the circumstances. Sometimes things change direction because of circumstances, sometimes because of the mood of a character – I don't think it's systematic.

What is it that makes you want to do a particular project? One thread that seems to be common to your work is the game factor – the need to invent a particular structure or set of rules.

I like it when I can see that a film has a specific form – when it's not just a documentary slice of life. Even if the form is hidden, I like it when I can see that by working on it, you can get at an underlying structure that will make the film hold together. I like composers such as Alban Berg, who in *Lulu* and *Wozzeck* is working with certain fixed forms – they're not always visible in the presentation, but they provide an internal tension. It makes for a hidden scaffolding and that's what I need to work with.

Since 'Mélo', you've seemed particularly inclined to work with miniatures.

There are partly financial reasons for that. I was planning a film about a *maison de culture*. There were scenes with 100 spectators over several days, but extras cost so much, we had to find something else. We only just managed to finish *La Vie est un roman*. There were so many scenes involving about 100 people, and we managed to get it down to 30, but it was difficult. I'm really unhappy with some scenes. In one, Geraldine Chaplin enters and is supposed to be unable to push her way through the crowd. We had to keep getting what crowd we had to regroup, but you can see that it was perfectly easy for her to push through.

Do you feel isolated in the current climate of French cinema, which seems increasingly to be dominated by the Claude Berri school of epics?

Yes, but no more than before. It's a matter of chance – I get to make the films that producers think can be made. If I went to them and said, I want to do... I don't know, a Zola novel other than *Germinal*... *Le Ventre de Paris*, say. "You see the meat, the fruit and vegetables in the Paris Halles in the morning, it'll be wonderful, we'll rebuild Les Halles as they were in 1870" – it's an exciting idea, but no producer would do it.

You've famously been influenced by comics, and have used comic-strip artists to announce a certain comic-strip aspect to the audience – for example by having Enki Bilal design the posters for 'Mon Oncle d'Amérique' and 'La Vie est un roman'.

My films are very influenced by comics, but not necessarily the 'drawn' aspect. There are certain effects of editing in them, the way things are put together, which are taken straight from artists such as Milton Caniff – they're narrative processes. Caniff, especially in *Steve Canyon*, had a way of carrying dialogue over images that the dialogue didn't strictly relate to. It was fascinating to try that.

I knew Caniff's *Terry and the Pirates* in 1936, but I had only the Sunday episodes – I could only get the weekday strips in Italian. Then Hitler and Mussolini came along, and for four years I couldn't get them at all. When the Americans arrived in Paris, I could get the Sunday supplements. Suddenly I found Terry had become a lieutenant and I was four years older. It was a pleasure seeing the stories take shape – it was a real task of dramatic construction.

I can see how that might entail a certain disregard for linearity. In 'Smoking/No Smoking', all the denouements are equally disposable – any one seems as good as the rest.

In France, many more came to see *Smoking*. I'm sure that means something, but I don't know what. It was the 'No' in *No Smoking* that made people want to see the other one first. Originally, I thought of calling one, *Ou bien... ou bien* (*Either... Or...*) and the other one, *C'est comme ça... ou autrement* (*Like that... Or otherwise*). But then it seemed a bit patronising, a bit Pirandello.

Jonathan Romney: How did the unlikely collaboration between you and Alain Resnais come about?

Alan Ayckbourn: I met Resnais five years ago when he came to Scarborough to see my play *The Revengers' Comedies*. He didn't tell anyone he was coming, but one of the actors told me he was there. I was completely sceptical, I thought, "oh yes, and Jean-Luc Godard's coming tomorrow." Then I went through and there he was. A year later, he came back and said he'd like to film one of my plays. I said, "Which one? Take your pick," but I was rather taken aback when he said *Intimate Exchanges*. I said, "You know it has 16 endings? You can't do all of them." He said, "Maybe I'll do 12." I said, "A film with 12 endings?" "No no no no, three or four films." It came down to two.



Prodigal daughter, wayward father: Azéma and Arditi as Sylvie Bell and Toby Teasdale in 'Smoking'

I think what attracted him was the shape of it. It came about like this – for convenience you tend to round off moments in your life by making it appear that you made decisions, "I did this, I did that..." Then, even as you're saying it, you realise it wasn't like that. You happened to be sitting there one evening and the phone rang... I began to realise that often major things happen to people simply as a result of being caught in the rain. So I thought it would be interesting to start with a tiny decision and watch that tiny pebble gather ripples.

The experience of seeing the two films is very different from seeing the plays over the course of a week.

The difference between *Smoking/No Smoking* and the stage play is in terms of commitment. You are only asked to see two films and even if you watch only one you see a large chunk of it. With the stage play, you were asked for a commitment of several nights if you were going to see it in any sort of comprehensive way. The arrangement of the plays was going to be random, but the stage manager said, "There's no way I'm going to keep eight sets waiting in the wings", so we had to do them in strict rotation.

The film comes across as something of a refusal of the cinematic in favour of the theatrical – which in a sense makes it more cinematic, because we're so aware of the particularity of what we're seeing.

A lot of what I write is consciously lifted from film. My early life was spent not in the theatre but in the cinema, so all my theatre grammar is in fact film grammar. Translating it back into film could be disastrous, so Resnais' way of approaching it seemed to be a solution. He has extraordinary ideas. At one point, he wanted the camera to move around and there would be a huge audience from my theatre.

You weren't involved in the process of shooting. What was your reaction when you saw the final result?

I found it staggering. What I loved was that there is a feeling of leisure about it. Everything in cinema seems so frenetic – what I loved was the feeling of theatricality. You know it's two actors playing different characters, and you have those moments where they're going off and changing. There is one moment where Toby comes in and Miles almost passes him in the doorway. They don't quite appear on screen together – it's as if Resnais were saying, "Well I could have done that but I didn't, nor did I have Toby and Miles sit down and have a chat together." We decided that he makes plays for cinema and I make films for theatre.

You've famously been in the habit of turning down offers to write for films. How comfortable are you with cinema?

I think film has done theatre a service in encouraging people to take vast amounts of information on board very quickly – the audience tends to be attuned to a much greater degree of information, which has been good for us playwrights, as we've been able to move things on a bit more quickly. If you look at plays written in the 50s, set-ups telling people where we are and who we are tend to go on forever.

The early films that interested me were René Clair's films, which was the first time I'd seen cinema where you could suddenly step outside naturalism – like that scene in *Le Million* where they start playing ball with his jacket. Lately I've discovered people like Preston Sturges, I've gone back to all that wonderful writing.

In terms of what I use, the obvious example is *The Revengers' Comedies*, which is full of quotes – it starts with *Strangers on a Train*. In another play, *Communicating Doors*, there's a direct quote from *Psycho*. I love the idea of cinematographising stage technique. Working in the round, which I do most of the time, is very fluid – you don't have the proscenium arch, so one tends to find alternatives to the curtain going up and down. Blackouts are very boring, so I try a lot of things with sound and lighting.

Your last experience with film was Michael Winner's adaptation of 'A Chorus of Disapproval', for which you had joint script credit. It's hard to imagine a more polarised choice of directors.

With *Chorus* I handed over my draft, I don't think I'd take much credit for it. Unfortunately the big studios have always had strings attached to do with Americanising the plays and I've always protested that I'm not the best person to be writing them. Years ago, I had a play called *Body Language*, which was about a dark, bizarre idea that appealed to them – a head swap – but they came in saying, "we must make them American". I said, "you can't do that – my Angie's a Page 3 girl, with that extraordinary Englishness."

'Smoking/No Smoking' opens on 16 September and is reviewed on page 46 of this issue

WAITING FOR THE END

The passage of time and its consequences is what binds together the films of Alain Resnais, from 'Hiroshima mon amour' to 'Smoking/No Smoking'. By Philip Strick

"Choose from among the three possibilities, or use all three, either one after the other or separately, at random." It could be, and almost is, part of Alan Ayckbourn's introduction to the "piece of theatrical lunacy" that Alain Resnais has turned into *Smoking/No Smoking*. In fact, it was a footnote by Marguerite Duras to a sequence in her screenplay for *Hiroshima mon amour*, written 36 years ago. Undecided between three bits of dialogue, she left the selection to Resnais, with whom she was working on their first feature film. Starting as he meant to continue, he used all three.

Since it's more than likely that Ayckbourn, an enthusiastic filmgoer, encountered *Hiroshima mon amour* at an impressionable age, the interesting chance comes to mind that the multiple choices offered by *Smoking/No Smoking* originate with Resnais himself (or with Duras, or then again with Hitchcock who, in *Blackmail*, set a remarkable precedent for intercutting between images of lifeless hands). Certainly if any obvious link is to be found between the earliest and latest of Resnais' fiction films, it would be in their casual fluency of repetition as characters and predicaments recur in an associative spiral. But at first glance that's about the limit: in appearance, they could hardly be more different. Where the Resnais of the 60s had a recognisable lexicon of camera movements and shock cuts traceable back to the format of his documentaries, the Resnais of the 80s could be described as increasingly reticent, retreating behind the skills of his unit as if no more than a spectator to the filming process.

What was once part of the Resnais signature, and seems now part of everybody else's, is the subjective glimpse of imagined or recollected detail, taken to mesmerising extremes in *L'Année dernière à Marienbad* (1961) and *Providence* (1977) but since discarded. We are no longer invited to identify with Resnais' protagonists by seeing what passes through their mind's eye, the restless assemblage of faces and front doors in *La Guerre est finie* (1966), the time-travel flashes of *Je t'aime, je t'aime* (1968). Instead, with effect from *Mon Oncle d'Amérique* (1980), his subjects have become case histories, illustrating theories of human conduct about which Resnais characteristically professes to have no personal opinion. The camera movements continue, but with functional rather than emotive purpose, patrolling to catch an expression or a stance, but content to keep at a distance, converting the frame into a proscenium arch.

The shock cuts that remain (and each Resnais film has its jolts of the unexpected) are now a function not of the editing process, supervised uninterruptedly for nearly three decades by Albert Jurgenson, but of the structure – the blackouts of *L'Amour à mort* (1984), the red curtain that divides *Mélo* (1986) firmly into acts of tragi-comedy, the methodical segmentation of *Smoking/No Smoking* into maybes and might-have-beens. With these imposed punctuations of his chosen material, Resnais' editorial role has become again that of a documentarist, more manipulative than filmic, expressionism transcended by introspection.

It could hardly be claimed, of course, that *Smoking/No Smoking* is anything like a documentary, or that everything within it, from the model train rattling among the miniatures of the backdrop to the wildly extravagant fashions displayed by Celia and Rowena, does not have the wholehearted approval of the director. The technical aspects of filming, the welter of problems that have to be solved for each scene to work, clearly absorb Resnais more than ever, although most of the solutions he finds are tricks of lighting and performance, openly and often mischievously theatrical. It is as if, having assigned himself by accident to something no one else would dream of filming, he guides his team into making the best of it.

Obsessive courtships

Only later, after all the accidents are taken into account that dictate that one project is financed and another shelved, or that a scene is filmed one way rather than another, is it possible to see the connections between the disparate Resnais output and to recognise that in his adherence to the texts of other writers (to which he famously, if unconvincingly, claims never to add any words of his own) he is in fact following a highly personal scenario, compiled from received material. While it would be difficult, for instance, to find a sequence in *Smoking/No Smoking* that does not echo – thanks to Ayckbourn's deliberate use and misuse of the conventional – countless similar dramas in Resnais' work or out of it, there is a particular affinity between the Ayckbourn lines and those of Henry Bernstein, whose *Mélo* is a comparable labyrinth of deceits. The heroine of *Mélo*, planning to betray her husband on the strength of a tale of romantic woe from their charismatic dinner guest, stands reincarnated three times in *Smoking/No Smoking*: as Celia, who starts the whole tale of consequences by testing her will on a cigarette packet, as the capricious maid Sylvie, and as the neglected Rowena Coombes, who admits without regret to having slept with most of the local squash club.



RONALD GRANT (2)

Always lost: 'Hiroshima mon amour'

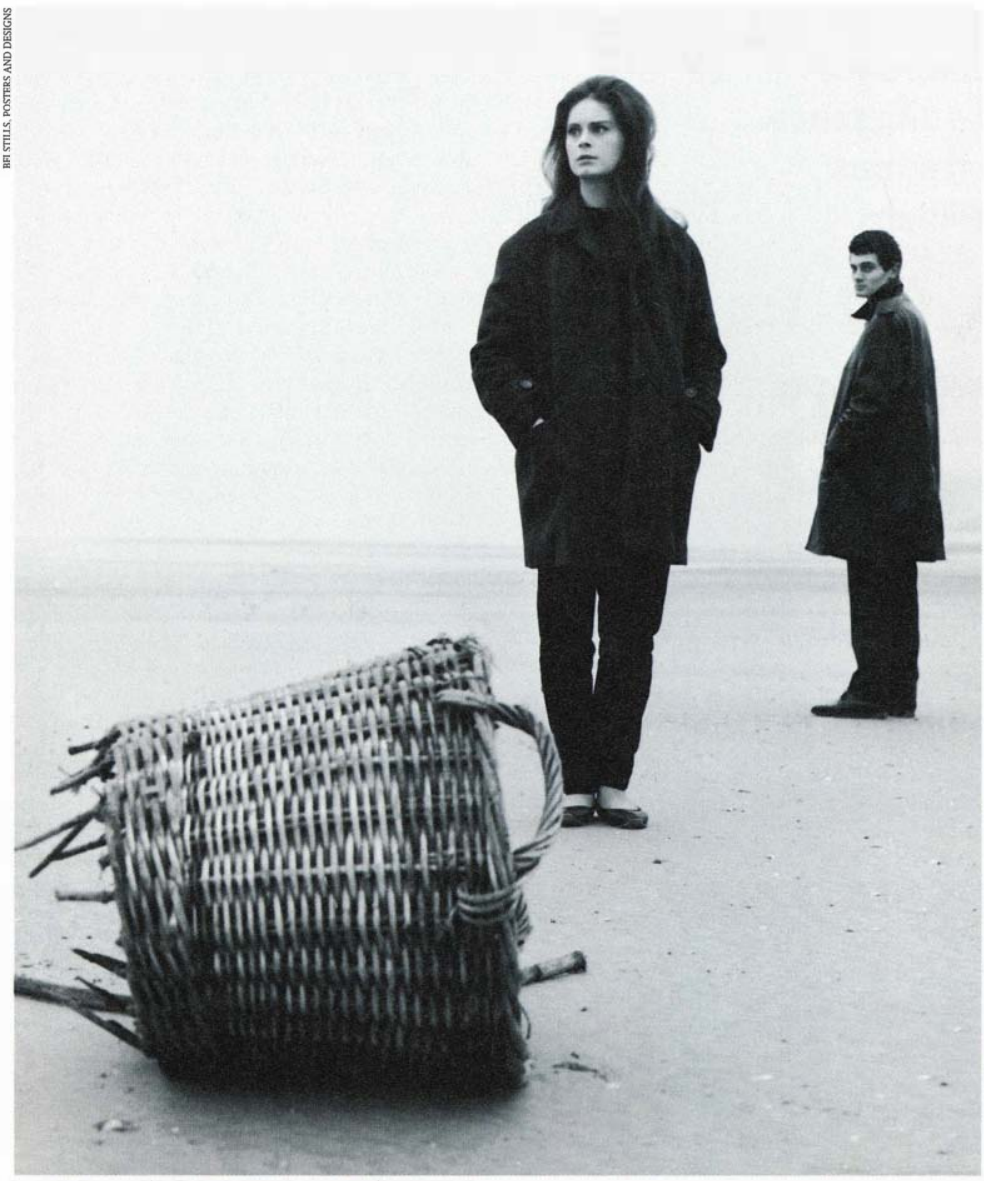


Bewildered by time: 'L'Année dernière à Marienbad'

Such betrayals, or the fear of them, are a constant in Resnais' films, where partners shuffle and reshuffle themselves in feverish attempts at loyalty. The most inscrutable of these obsessive courtships occurs in *Marienbad*, where the question of who has prior claim to Delphine Seyrig's affections is never satisfactorily resolved; the most poignant is in *L'Amour à mort*, nine films later, which debates a bereaved wife's contention that marriage continues beyond the grave and that promises to the dead should be kept. The tissue of liaisons and lies spun with helpless defiance by Resnais' characters is contemplated with neither complicity nor disdain, but with an uncritical detachment. "I shoot my films," says Resnais, "to see how they will end" – and he convincingly demonstrates a genial disinterest in what their endings might be by providing in *Smoking/No Smoking* a whole series of them. It's up to us to pick the best, the worst, or the most plausible.

It would be impractical to identify a suggested code of conduct from these multiple conclusions, or from the habitual and impulsive exchange of messages – by phone, letter and quotation – that propels Resnais' stories. If, like a documentarist, he works by selection rather than by initiation, he remains firmly averse to preference; it might be guessed from the Ouspenskian repetitions in his films that Resnais regards most decision-making as futile. His prime certainty is the passage of time and its consequences, his characters perpetually reviewing their past and finding, to their distress, that it no longer has any currency. More crucial than memory (to which Resnais says he has never attached any importance), it is forgetfulness that torments them – as with the heroine of *Hiroshima mon amour*, whose face, in Duras' haunting phrase, hasn't been used for several months; the girl in *Muriel* who claims to have no past at all; or the desolate widow of *L'Amour à mort*, who reaches automatically for an ingredient from the fridge before recalling that her husband doesn't need it any more. The five-year leaps forward in *Smoking/No Smoking*, recalling similar time shifts in *Mon Oncle d'Amérique*, *La Vie est un roman* and *Mélo*, establish positions from which both past and future are seen to have complete flexibility: lives have somehow seeped away without proving anything. At the end of *Mélo*, the only certainty in the relationship of two old friends, the one cynically and deliberately cheated by the other, is the music they share. In Brahms, at least, there is some lasting truth.

Resnais' passion for music is, as might be expected, guarded and equivocal. In *L'Amour à mort*, much taken with the score provided by



BFI STILLS, POSTERS AND DESIGNS

Fractured pasts: Nita Klein, Jean-Baptiste Thierrée in 'Muriel'

Hans-Werner Henze (who also wrote the music for *Muriel*), he frequently empties the screen so the music can be listened to without distraction. While a keen ear might resolutely follow the course of Henze's composition regardless of interpolations by cast and story, the reality is that so many possible meanings are implied by these insistent voids with their drifting white flakes (the brink of unconsciousness?) that like the intervention of the behavioural professor in *Mon Oncle d'Amérique* or the alternative episodes of *Smoking/No Smoking*, they become random recollections of some other experience entirely. Rather as with the song in *Muriel* about the passing of time, or the young teacher's sudden outburst in *La Vie est un roman*, an unheralded and suspiciously charming declaration of faith in the power of love, the story stops when the music begins.

The director's musical affections are less hesitantly audible in *Gershwin* (1991), his surprise return to authentic documentary. Vilified at its first television transmission in Britain ("Does the memory of Gershwin an ill-service... an hour of superficial pap," snorted the *Times*), it is indeed a joyously incomplete guide to the composer but has plenty to offer about Resnais. The elusive Gershwin proves, in fact, an ideal subject, partly because all we really know of him is his music and partly because according to Resnais, that's all we need to know – the music contains the history, complexities, and above all the *meaning* of its originator. Following efforts on the soundtrack by voices of various nationalities to guess at Gershwin's identity, the author of three books on him, Edward Jablonski, begins an accolade that is promptly drowned out by another commentary, an account of Gershwin's final concert in 1937. As with *Stavisky...* (1974), the action starts, as Resnais was at pains to point out, after the death of the central character, who is defined by his effect on the society around him.

Champion of 'lost' women

Whether or not Gershwin, like Stavisky, marked the end of an era (which, given his music's durable popularity, has in a sense not ended at all), he was a vital part of the 30s in America, the years of Resnais' adolescence on the other side of the Atlantic and the period he returns to in *Mélo*. Recapturing it again in *Gershwin*, largely through paintings by Guy Pellaert based on news photographs, the images flowing into each other, Resnais floats through time on a rostrum camera, interrupted by occasional experts and friends (like Adolph Green, fresh out of *I Want to Go Home*), whom he in turn interrupts. Parodying the usual method of tribute movies, he dissolves mercilessly in full close-up, so that the faces of his interviewees ripple and change with disconcerting unreliability. Among the contributors, Bertrand Tavernier is filmed in a record archive, wandering the corridor clutching an LP and quoting the lyrics of 'Swanee' while Resnais, in evident delight at the eccentricity of this approach, stares at him with a field lens. Despairing of doing justice to his topic, Tavernier retreats from us as far as he can, asserts defiantly that "nearly all the jazz musicians I've met professed vast admiration for Gershwin" and, as if in recognition that this doesn't prove much of anything, leaves the camera to stare thoughtfully at the record racks by itself.

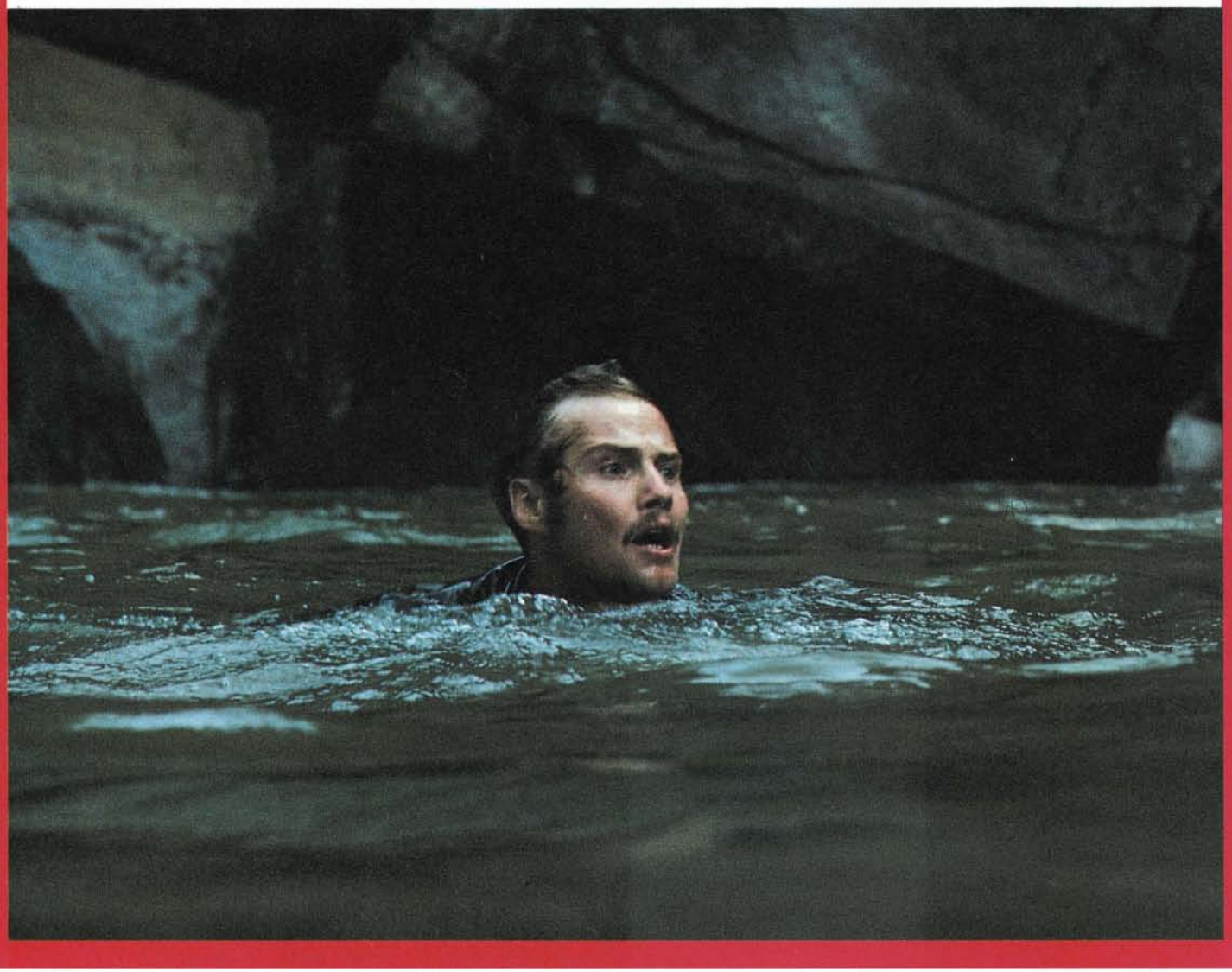
For much of his film's second half, Resnais simply runs a succession of Gershwin fragments and showbiz photographs, tantalising reminders of the composer's output year after year, of forgotten stage shows and still-famous partnerships. The impossibility of a complete portrait is confirmed by an image of the back of Gershwin's head (reminder of the shot of Arditi by the river in *L'Amour à mort*) on which Resnais superimposes a rapid montage of the composer's face, smiling for the public, giving nothing away, a torrent of alternatives from which we can form our own judgment. There is a Magrittian feeling about all this, enhanced by the use of Pellaert's images which leave concertgoers gliding in mid-air, adrift from reality. The true Gershwin, for Resnais, is not the enigmatic monochrome figure briefly glimpsed thumping at a keyboard, but the collection of notes, modulating into an intricate rearrangement of themselves, that have become such standards as 'Lady, Be Good'.

In devoting the most attentive of his sequences to this Gershwin song, which he invites a pianist to analyse for him, Resnais seems once again to be having a joke at his own expense, the goodness of ladies to themselves and others having been, after all, central to his work, with particular focus on what might be termed the Azéma decade (beginning with *La Vie est un roman* in 1983). Looking back from the vantage point of *Smoking/No Smoking*, it is feasible to regard Resnais as the constant and hopeful champion of 'lost' women with, to judge from most of the Ayckbourn variations, considerable powers of survival and recuperation. Against this has to be set the other underlying theme of *Gershwin* – again reinforced by Ayckbourn's endings – summarised by the closing shot of the composer's tomb.

The Resnais camera studies this remorseless conclusion with an air of glum satisfaction, as if the perpetuity it contains could be denied by the defiant birdsong on the soundtrack. In a lifelong output of stories set on the edge of the grave, Resnais continues to look for alternatives, a deathlessness that has to be achievable in some guise or other. In the process, as one of his guests says about Gershwin, "he takes you on an adventure – there's a restlessness about him, a kind of urgency. So much is happening in the music besides the melody..."

John Boorman's cult film 'Deliverance' is a rape-revenge movie with a difference. Its haunting power lies in what it tries not to show. By Linda Ruth Williams

BLOOD BROTHERS



PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN R. HAMILTON / GLOBE

There is a contradiction at the heart of the word 'deliverance'. It is, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, both "The act of setting free, or fact of being set free; liberation, release, rescue" and "The action of giving up; surrender". It is this double-edged meaning, of liberation and submission, active release and passive acquiescence to bondage, which characterises the uneasy dynamic of John Boorman's 1972 cult film *Deliverance*.

Four city men from Atlanta set out to canoe down "the last wild, untamed, unpolluted, unfucked-up river in the south", led by macho pseudo-philosopher Lewis (Burt Reynolds), whose proclamations on survival in the wilderness provide the narration for the first part of the film. This is a wilderness about to be drowned: the monolithic "power company" we see bulldozing and dynamiting as the credits roll, moving churches and digging up coffins as the film draws to a close, is engaged in a wholesale act of ecological "rape" (as Lewis puts it), damming the river and flooding everything in its wake. The feeling that something is in the process of being lost, that this is a 'last chance', pervades the film. Indeed, the poor white trash backwoods folk with whom Lewis and his friends soon clash are themselves on the brink of displacement, if not extinction.

The trip unravels into an antediluvian nightmare of pursuit, as the sinister, 'genetically deficient' mountain-men hunt our heroes down river: in the film's most infamous scene, Bobby (Ned Beatty) is anally raped as Ed (Jon Voight) is forced to look on, only to escape oral rape himself when Lewis kills Bobby's rapist. Drew (Ronny Cox) then dies in ambiguous circumstances, reappearing later as a horribly twisted corpse; Lewis is badly injured and relinquishes control to Ed, who shoots his (suspected) would-be rapist and hunter with an arrow. The three survivors escape to an unnerving safety built on a cover-up story which disavows not only the double murder they have committed but the shame of male rape and the uneasy circumstances of Drew's death. Who, then, is delivering what from whom or whom from what? Who or what is being given up, and what is the relationship between surrender and liberation in this most harrowing of films?

On one level this is a film animated by a pure motive of retribution: it is a rape-revenge story with a difference, the rape being not just man-on-man but country monsters hunting down rich city folk. But in fact nothing here is pure and everything is reversed, since the initial acts of violence can already be seen as retribution, with the country folk getting revenge for the indignities and injustices wreaked upon them by the townies they now have the chance to victimise. As the film opens we are poised on the edge of a monumental natural apocalypse. "You don't beat it – you don't beat this river," says Lewis as he ironically likens their penetration of the river by canoe to that of "the first explorers", precursors of the power company which is, of course, precisely in the process of "beating" the river. Indeed, theirs is a kind of 'natural' sex crime: "we're gonna rape this whole goddamn landscape," says Lewis, an ecological act akin to the imperial penetration of the Congo in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. It is not just that a sexual crisis happens within a natural landscape, but that what is happening within and to that landscape is itself sexual. For nature in this film, read sex; for relationships between city men and the natural world, a final frontier still left within America, read sexual violence. The river is, conventionally enough, a 'she', while the woods are "real deep – inaccessible" – the fantasy *mise en scène* of a deeply transgressive Grimms fairy tale.

Between uncertainty and impotence: Jon Voight as Ed, the witness of 'Deliverance', battles with the elements, opposite

In the middle of all this are the "mountain-men" themselves. They are somehow too close to nature, their home the site of the "rape" of which Lewis speaks, their identity marked and muddied by being 'too natural' to be properly human (the "mountain-" prefix qualifies their status as "men"), too intimate with and isolated by the natural (American) landscape to be wholesomely American (an encounter with 'authentic' – even redneck – Americana thus poses the question, are the Appalachians as American as the Atlantans?). "There are some people up there that ain't never seen a town before," says Lewis at the start, but we (and he) soon find out that nature here is not redeeming; indeed, too much nature is deforming. So natural are these people that they have become unnatural (*too* natural), but the precise nature of their 'naturalness' is characterised not by an idealised authenticity but by something darker. Critics often note the cinematic conventions governing the representation of Deep South country folk – bad teeth, worn dungarees, rusty cars, lazy demeanour appropriate to long hot afternoons lounging on the peeling verandah – as well as their willingness to go one step further as the monstrous hillbillies of horror. Bobby's opening observation about the detritus of civilisation washed up at their first stop – "Look at the junk. I think this is where everything finishes up. We may just be at the end of the line" – is already laced with threat. Here is the place where everything is lost (and not lost); "no one can find us here," says Ed later, and no one can hear them scream either.

The horror potential of a country-vs-city clash, charged up by varying degrees and histories of economic exploitation, cultural misunderstanding and sexual threat, has been a rich cinematic resource in the last 30 years or so, well charted by Kim Newman, Carol Clover and others. *Straw Dogs* (1971), *The Hills Have Eyes* (1977), *Southern Comfort* (1981), the *Texas Chain Saw Massacre* films (1974 onwards), to name only a few, all play with a similar bank of city-meets (and defeats)-country elements. The family too has long been a staple source for horror, as breeding site for psychosis, indulged taboo desires, mutant or demonic children, mostly born cinematically from the late 60s to the mid-70s into the families of urban (and often prosperous) America – *Rosemary's Baby* (1968), *The Exorcist* (1973), *The Omen* (1976), *Carrie* (1976), *The Fury* (1978), even *Eraserhead* (1976). The rural family is quite a different matter, a composite monster rendered from recognisable elements of backwoods Americana and the awful suspicion that interbreeding and literal motherfucking have shredded the vestiges of behavioural control. These are people who might do *anything*, because they have already done, or been begotten by, the worst possible thing.

In *Deliverance* country folk are quite simply interbred, bearing the visible cinematic signs of their natural unnaturalness. Uneasy glimpses of bodies which (we assume) wear the symptoms of incest push the film into difficult territory from the start. "All these people are related," Lewis says after dispatching the rapist, their interconnection entirely undermining the law: "I'll be goddamned if I'm gonna come back up here and stand trial with this man's aunt and his uncle, maybe his mom and his daddy sitting in the jury box." We already know something of this from the half-glimpsed handicapped child watched over by his grandmother, and the visible difference of the albino and strangely androgynous retarded boy with the banjo, striking out the famous "duelling banjos" theme with uncanny dexterity while also challenging us (along with the Atlantan invaders) to make the judgment of sub-humanity. "Talk about genetic deficiencies," says Bobby, "Ain't that pitiful?"

So rather than show the consequences of the death or the absence of the family, here the city men become entangled in a sticky, genetically intensified web made by *too much* family. If the family done right ideally facilitates the smooth path into cultural conformity, the family done wrong breaks open the membrane of civilisation with alarming (and here visually evident) consequences. The unnatural disturbances to human 'normality' brought about by an all-too-natural ignorance or defiance of the incest taboo (a defiance which, it seems, all country people live, breathe and breed by) are at work. In a film which is far less graphically horrific than those who last saw it (and were shocked by it) in the 70s might remember it as, perhaps it is this which underpins all that is most unnerving on screen and in implication: an overwhelming sense of related-ness run wild.

Deliverance is often read as a masculinity-in-crisis film, within which these four men, more or less emasculated by city life, have to recover their lost (but not dead) 'Iron John' manhood. However, this is not so much a film about men looking for an authentic gender identity as a film about masculinity as an agent of change and difference, something which, far from being fixed, immutable, sovereign, can be lost and precariously found, diminished or warped. Beyond the surface conflicts of 'men versus the elements' or 'civilised masculinity versus the rednecks', the film is caught up in a protracted encounter between men and their male 'others'. This is a man's film in more ways than one (just as it shows that to be a man is rather more than one thing). While family abnormalities underpin all that is wrong here, these are families which keep their women to the margins. Women only creep around the edges and are always seen indoors: from our brief glimpse, ten minutes into the film, of the grandmother seen through the window from Ed's point of view, to the last 15 minutes, when Ed meets a nurse and Bobby discusses large cucumbers with another old woman, the only 'real' ▶

◀ woman's face we see is, fleetingly, a photograph of Ed's wife, which slips from his fingers as he climbs the cliff face.

Hunting men

As the country family closes ranks, the city family begins to crumble. The woman in the photograph stands with her small son, and both of them are lost when the image falls. In the 'funeral' speech Ed gives for Drew, the family is evoked but in a way which underscores the fact that Drew has failed them. Ed stands in the water, embracing Drew's body as he speaks, staring into nothing (a look Voight perfects in this film). His gaze shifts around as he strains to see the dead person he holds tenderly from *behind*, and who he is therefore deliberately not looking *at* (both faces look towards us in the finely balanced frame, one above the other). What Ed sees and doesn't see is important – his role as visual witness of a number of disturbing images echoes the use of his voice for the first-person narration of James Dickey's novel *Deliverance*. In the film, however, the implied authority of this position is lost, and our occasional adoption of Ed's point of view only undermines our certainty about what we're seeing, an ambiguity enforced by the film's colour (or lack of it). The palette of the funeral scene is muted (Boorman's use of colour desaturation across the film constantly undermines the boundaries between objects), blurring the distinction between Drew's body and the muddy water into which Ed is to launch him in a parody of a total-immersion baptism. Repeated cuts between Ed embracing the supine Drew and the mute Lewis, now injured, lying in a similar pose in the canoe, suggest that Ed might as well be burying them all. In the middle of all this, one of the few bright objects is Ed's wedding ring on the hand which holds the rock to which Drew is tied. But just as women and families are evoked as comfort and justification, so they are lost. Ed's speech underlines the uneasy distinction between presence and absence through its shift from third person to first: "He was a good husband to his wife Linda, and – uh – you were a wonderful father to your boys, Drew, Jimmy and Billy-Ray, and if we come through this I promise to do all I can for them." Ed is talking to, and looking at, Drew, himself, and nothing – this is as much about the loss of his own family as it is about Drew's family's loss of their father.

But it is not just that women are almost entirely absent from *Deliverance* which suggests that men become less-than or more-than men in certain circumstances. Nor is it simply that in a world without women, men become women (the scenario played out in David Cronenberg's 1970 film *Crimes of the Future*), but that marks of sexual identity and difference are set going in a process of mutation, intensified by the incestuous sexual pressure-cooker of the world of the film. Rather than guaranteeing stability or the law here, men only accelerate its breakdown. Far more interesting than the well-intentioned eco-tract this could have been is the anxious essay on identity *Deliverance* is.

It is in Jon Voight's character that this theme is most closely focused. Voight's Ed lies somewhere between the sexual uncertainties of his 1969 *Midnight Cowboy* role and his embittered, impotent Vietnam vet in the later *Coming Home* (1978). Other casting also plays with our expectations. In relinquishing his control (and his verbal prowess) half way through the film, Burt Reynolds plays Lewis against type, moving from action-philosopher who is always 'right' to wounded and silenced victim. James Dickey, as author of the novel and sole screenwriter credit (and therefore implicated in each side of every conflict represented here), acts on only one side of the law in a cameo role as the country sheriff who appears in the film's final act. Voight's characterisation also gestures towards later images in other films. At two points, critical for Ed, *Deliverance* foreshadows two scenes in *The Deer Hunter* (1978), when the Robert De Niro character first shoots, then later, at a similar moment, chooses *not* to shoot, his prey. For De Niro, the second encounter builds on the command and poise of the first, with an even greater sense of self-control, as well as empathy between hunter and deer. In contrast, on the first morning of *Deliverance*, Ed tracks a deer with bow and arrow, panics, ineptly releases the arrow and cries out in the process, entirely missing his target. It is a clear vignette of weakened masculinity shamefully (rather than violently) out of control; Ed is still very much the feeble advertising man, who has already suggested, at the first sign of danger, that they all "go back to town and play golf".

Yet the repetition of this scene later in the film does not turn the situation neatly around. By the next morning the men are deep inside their nightmare, and Ed is on the trail of human prey rather than deer. Again, his target is unseeing, again he has it in his sights, and in a crisis of trembling impotence, he cries "release", shooting his prey but also piercing himself with his own arrow. The sexual scenario played out here is far from subtle, but the way it focuses on the unresolved confusion of Ed's manhood is interesting. He talks to the corpse, holds its face, plays with its teeth (to check its identity, as the mouth of his would-be rapist), and then is fixed, embracing the body, in a post-coital freeze-frame. A little later, the two men, one dead, one alive, become entangled underwater in a grip which threatens to take Ed down too. The film concludes with Ed's very inconclusive view, and what kind of maleness we are left with is indeterminate: his nightmare of a flooded landscape, a woman's voice saying "Go to sleep". These do not add up to a redeemed, sovereign sexual identity which sits on only one side of the great divide.

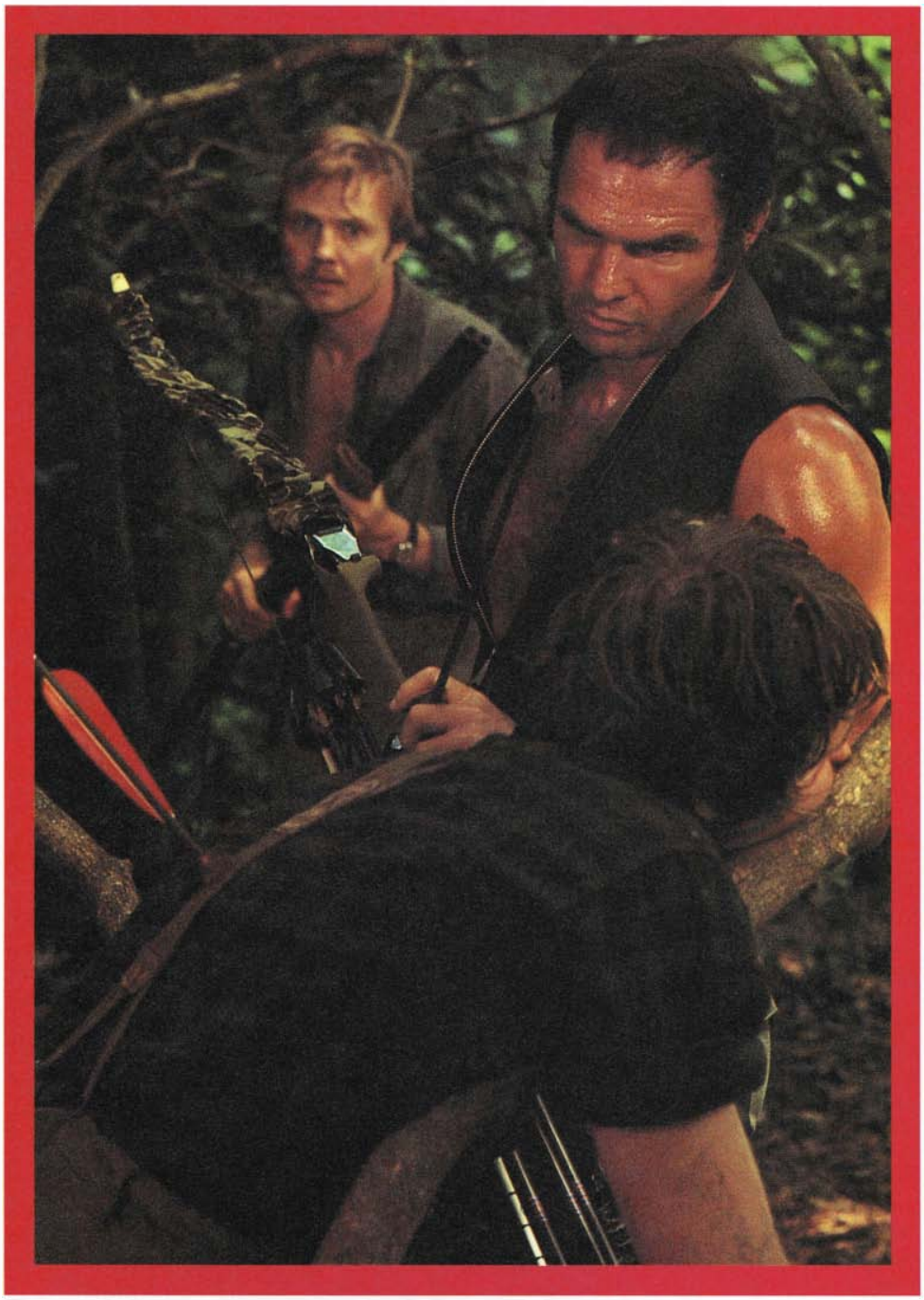
The difference which *Deliverance* delivers is sexual. Alongside the conventional narrative of a fairly classic moral-crisis film (which argues that heroes need to adopt the tactics of monsters in order to defeat monsters, thus becoming monstrous themselves) is a story of men who have lost (or sold) themselves battling with 'unnatural' men and only defeating them when they adopt their excessive (and perhaps unmale) forms of masculinity. The pervading sense of sexual infection which crosses the divide between inhabitants and invaders, rural monsters and urban exploiters, rapist and victim, compromises the marked identity of each from the other. It is, then, anxiety which characterises the identity of these men, much more than violence, action or control (the film's second line, part of the voiceover buddy talk echoed later in *Reservoir Dogs*, is "Why are you so anxious about this?") You are, it seems, only as manly as your last manful act, yet even the supposedly manful acts are subject to a number of interpretations.

The world of the film may be almost entirely populated by members of one sex, but paradoxically it is because of this that sexual difference is writ large in every scene. The sodomy scene lays this bare. Ed is tied to a tree by his neck, and must watch as Bobby is stripped. Rather than fighting back, Bobby begs for mercy, an action which is echoed in the scene just described: Ed shoots, but his hillbilly target keeps walking towards him pointing his gun, and though Ed is armed he can only cover his face and cower. "Hey, boy, you look just like a hog," says Bobby's assailant, "Go, Piggy – give me a ride." The scene then goes one step beyond; Bobby moves from human to pig, from male to female, and exactly what kind of sexual assault takes place at the point of his rape is appallingly ambiguous: "Looks like we got us a sow here instead of a boor... I'll bet you squeal like a pig." Is this entirely an act between men? How much is the degradation of the scene bound up with the feminisation of the assaulted bodies? "He got a real pretty mouth, ain't he?" says the second mountain-man, as he moves towards Ed. "You're gonna do some prayin' for me boy, and you better pray good" (it is Ed, of course, who then fondles *his attacker's* mouth later in the film).

Even though the first perceived violence of the film is forced sodomy between men, the conflict does not shake down clearly into one between heterosexual heroes and homosexual villains. If deliverance is surrender, these are men in part, and on both sides, 'delivered' of one kind of masculinity, a suggestion supported by Lewis' sporadic discourse on loss. Although early in the film he has proclaimed both that he's "never been lost in [his] life" and that "there's no risk" ("I don't believe in insurance," he says to Ed), he nevertheless continues to counsel a certain kind of macho submission: "sometimes you have to lose yourself before you can find anything." As Lewis recklessly drives Ed down to the water's edge, the camera catches their faces behind the windscreen which is itself a blur of reflected, rapidly moving trees; depth of field and colour desaturation minimise the differences between planes and objects, sweeping the men into the foliage.

Assaulting bodies

What, then, has been lost or remembered of *Deliverance* in the 22 years since its release? While its harrowing power is undeniable, its image as one of the most violent mainstream films of the 70s may now seem odd. Although the film is often remembered as flagrantly vicious, the nasty brother of the nastier *Straw Dogs* or the much later *Southern Comfort*, remembering the event like that doesn't mean that it *was* like that, or even that there was an event to



Men at war: Burt Reynolds as city-boy Lewis clashes with the 'white trash' mountain-men

The harrowing power of Boorman's 'Deliverance' is undeniable, but its image as one of the most violent mainstream films of the 70s may now seem odd

remember. Nevertheless, a kind of collective forgetting of Bobby's rape prevailed among critics of the day. For *Sight and Sound* in the autumn of 1972, "All the Saturday matinée thrills are there", but nowhere in the review is it mentioned that one of these is sodomy. Similarly the *MFB* mentions a "sexual assault" almost in passing and only in the synopsis. What *is* stressed are other forms of violence. *Variety*, clearly deeply offended and again failing to mention the sodomy, berates the film's "rhapsodic wallowing in the deadly beauty" of "sudden, violent death". Yet this is no Peckinpah bloodbath: there are two deaths, the first protracted but unbloody, and a drowned, twisted corpse. The film's power lies more in what it tries not to show, how it plays with what you saw and didn't see, what it denies you as well as what it offers up.

The mis-remembering that critics have suffered from is very like something which is going on inside the film itself. If audiences are desperate to bury and forget, this is perhaps because those in the film are too, and it may be that one is a strange effect of the other. Beneath Lewis' glib philosophising lies a more pervasive discussion of loss, carried out partly through the way the film deals with its own past – and here too masculinity is at stake. The men respond to Bobby's rape and his rapist's murder through a process of burial, figurative and actual ("This thing's gonna be hanging over us the rest of our lives," says Lewis, and the film could be seen as almost a treatise on the many forms of repression). The positive, *active* loss which Lewis counsels (and maybe Bobby gets) turns into a communal act of repression: as the dead male body becomes a liability, the camera refuses to cut away from it, instead roving around the four desperate men who plot their next move with the body between them. To 'lose' it for good, they dig up the earth with their bare hands, and hide the body in a shallow grave soon to be overtaken by the floodwaters, "Hundreds of feet deep... that's about as buried as you can get". At the same time, Bobby is enforcing a burial of his rape (in which Ed is complicit): "I don't want this getting around."

Collective disavowal

A more unnerving collective disavowal takes place a little later, following Drew's death. Along with Ed, we see Drew fall, or throw himself, overboard. When the now-injured Lewis suggests that he was shot, immediately our memory of what we saw (did he fall or was he pushed?) is challenged by the men's desperate desire to deny suicide and put murder in its place. Even Ed, whose perspective was also ours, can only disavow his memory of the event and say of Lewis, "Of course he's right – of course." Most disturbingly of all, when Bobby raises the question of Ed's victim's identity further on in the film ("Are you sure that's him?... It wasn't just some guy up there hunting?"), Ed replies, "You tell me." As he speaks, an astonishing thing happens. Turning the corpse's face towards Bobby, Ed looks away and in the process turns his own face towards us, looking straight to camera and at the audience. The question becomes one for us too, and Ed's direct address, raised by his look, challenges us to make a response which is impossible. *Could* we tell him? Do we *know* what we've seen? Can we be *sure*? Fixed masculine identity, it seems, can no more be read in the face of man than it can be guaranteed by his actions, and we are as lost in these judgments as are those on screen. Perhaps it was something of this which generated those early feelings of horror and shock on the part of viewers also deeply involved in the film's tensions and conflicts, which ensured that they took away with them something they never actually saw, remembering their own disturbance as if it reflected a visual experience which is rarely there on screen. More significant than this mis-remembering is the anxious forgetting which has taken place, on and off screen.

A new print of 'Deliverance' will be released in late September; it has just been re-released on video as part of Warners' Elite collection

BETWEEN SLAPSTICK AND HORROR

Out of the dark story of Faust, Jan Svankmajer, the great Czech animator, has produced a remarkable new film. Michael O'Pray introduces 'Faust', and the director reflects on images from his work

Faust is Jan Svankmajer's first feature-length film and his most ambitious work since his adaptation of Lewis Carroll's *Alice* in 1988. Its action moves between puppets, animated models and 'real' actors to create a brilliant mix out of the traditional marionette theatre of Eastern Europe and life in post-communist Prague. Rather than making of Faust a Romantic, Goethian hero, Svankmajer seems to suggest that the Faustian universe exists for all of us within the hustle and bustle of everyday life.

Since his first film *The Last Trick* (1964), which celebrates the puppet theatre in which he was trained, Svankmajer has pursued many styles – live action, clay-modelling, puppets, object animation, drawing animation, stop-frame special effects and object collages. All of these techniques find their place in *Faust*. His work also shows the influence of two major art trends – Surrealism, which has survived in Czechoslovakia since the early 30s, and the overwrought and technically exuberant Mannerism which found one of its greatest expressions in the bizarre paintings of Arcimboldi, who was resident at the court of the eccentric Hapsburg emperor Rudolf II in Prague in the late sixteenth century. Like Svankmajer's earlier films *Don Juan* and *Punch and Judy*, *Faust* explores the puppet tradition with a Surrealist sense of the burlesque, the droll and the uncanny. It also reflects Svankmajer's fascination with the alchemical magic of Renaissance Europe. And finally *Faust* is a homage to Prague itself – the Surrealists' "magical city" – but here the director's camera avoids the magnificent baroque buildings and focuses instead on the delapidated courtyards, winding staircases, seedy hallways and bustling streets: the urban geography of the flaneur.

On a recent visit to England to help promote *Faust* at the Cambridge Film Festival, Svankmajer and his wife Eva stayed at Trinity College. It was as if a magic circle had been completed, made up of elements that include English Renaissance scholar Dr John Dee, sixteenth-century Prague, the Renaissance cabbala, alchemy, marionette theatre and Christopher Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*. It was in the hall of Trinity College in 1547 that Dr John Dee, who served as a model for Marlowe's Faust, invented a theatrical machine for his production of Aristophanes' *Pax* that propelled a man into the top of the theatre, causing rumours that its inventor was a sinister magician. Dee's machine has been seen as one of the establishing moments of the great English sixteenth-century theatre. Some years later, in 1580, Christopher Marlowe went up to Cambridge University. Marlowe, a spy in the Walsingham network of the Elizabethan period, was also a friend of minor poet Matthew Roydon, who visited Dee's scryer, Edward Kelley, in Rudolf II's court in Prague in 1591. Prague at the time hosted a clique of Catholic English exiles and was the centre of plots against the English throne. What Marlowe knew of "coining" was probably learned from Roydon, who in turn learned it from Kelley. Thus when Svankmajer adapts *Faust*, a whole circle of alchemists, dramatists and magicians are connected.

Marlowe's play survived largely through the popular theatre, by way of English travelling players who imported it to Germany, where it became part of the popular repertoire (its first recorded performance there was in Graz in 1608). It was also disseminated through the marionette theatre, probably receiving its first performance as a puppet play in Luneburg in 1666. Svankmajer's film has retained many of the pantomime aspects of early German popular drama as well as drawing on the marionette tradition that inspired Goethe, whose ▶

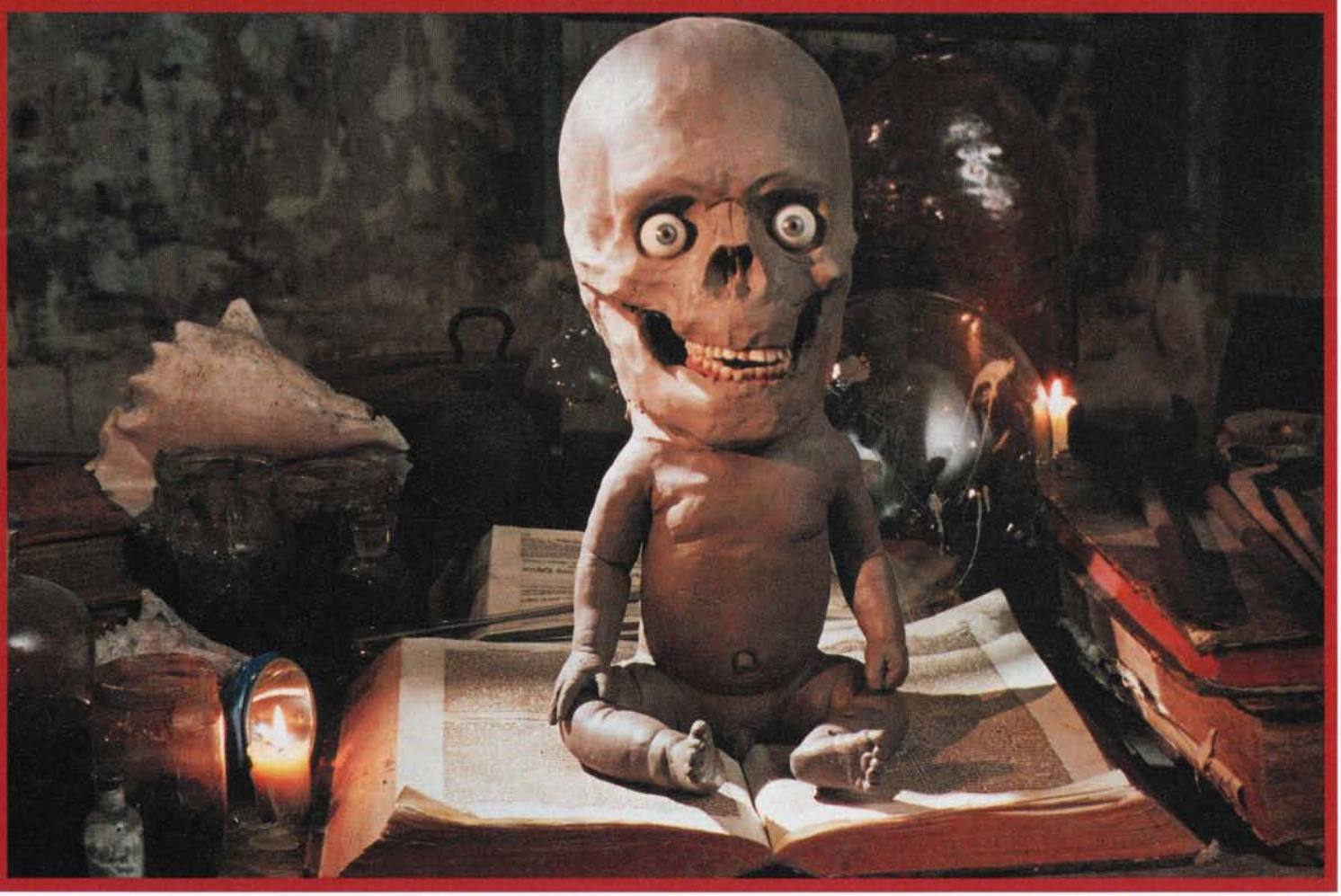
The cruelty of puppets

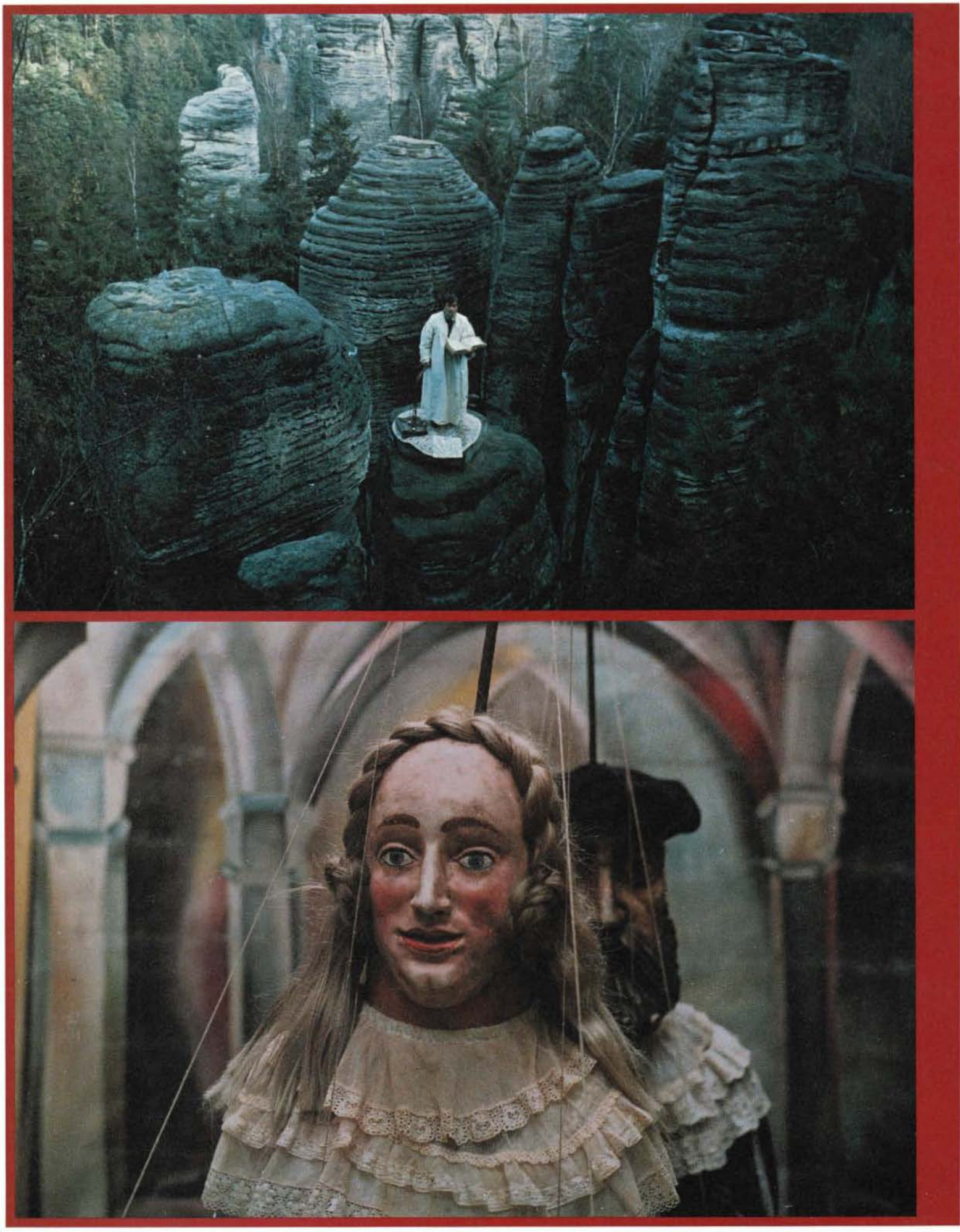
"I made the puppets. They are not copies, but are based on puppets of the nineteenth century. The original puppets were carved over generations by families with their own carving styles. I copied their patina to make them look as authentic as possible without stylising them. In my films I do not like to present a signature or artistic style; I'd like the audience to discover an authentic object that exists beyond me. I prefer the wooden hand with blood coming from it as it expresses the idea of metamorphosis and cruelty. It is a stronger image than a real hand, just as a puppet's expression is stronger than an actor's. My 'Don Juan' was not screened because it was seen as too horrific and violent. Similarly, the scene of the tiny devils and angels fighting, with its violent rapes, disturbed some of the audience in Cambridge because the use of effigies conveys these horrors much more effectively than real actors could"

Objects behaving strangely

"These are plaster casts taken from real people. We put Plasticine on to the plaster casts to create a face and then put on glass eyes and dentures. The result is a realistic face, not an artistic sculpture, part once again of my attempt not to introduce an artistic signature. The Brothers Quay are different here: they want to create a special artificial world, whereas I try to create something real. The subversive quality of my work comes from the fact that the audience sees ordinary objects which behave very strangely, so their relationship to them is called into question. That is the difference between Surrealism and the art of the fantastic"







Calling up the Devil

"This was shot at Prachovske Skaly, which is known locally as Bohemian Paradise, a collection of rocks I used to visit as a child. It is enormous, like a city of pillars. The actor had to be tied to the rock as there are 40-foot drops on either side and we were afraid for his safety. We tried to take the close-ups down below but it didn't work, so we had to put him back on the pinnacle. When Marlowe's 'Doctor Faustus' was played in the past, sometimes the incantation of the Devil would result in mass hysteria among the audience, who would rush to the nearest church. This fusion of real life and theatre fascinates me. The magic text used by Faust here is an authentic one from the Middle Ages. I used records of what was supposed to happen during the incantation; the scene of the magical brooms, for example, was not something I invented but what was meant to have happened when calling up Mephistopheles"



The three devils

"This scene was designed by my wife, Eva Svankmajerova. Eva is not preoccupied with authenticity, she is a painter and I select from her work according to the film I'm making. Eva started her career painting for puppet theatre and the backdrops here are more in that spirit. There are actors inside the marionettes and the horror and dignity of the devils is a question of the timing and movement of the puppets"

Helen's tragedy

"This is based on an original mask from the puppet theatre version of 'Faust' taken from Marlowe. I used the same technique in 'Don Juan'. The form of my films is always the result of what I want to express and not the other way around; the content determines what kind of animation I do. Here, I wanted to combine the high aims of Goethe and Marlowe with the low aims of puppet theatre because high and low together create a certain magic. Even if the puppeteers copied live theatre and used human proportions to make their creations as realistic as possible, the stylisation is nevertheless naive; an actor would not be capable of the same strength of expression. Only a mask can sustain the mix of slapstick and tragedy that occurs in most of my films"



Devil head

"This is the Devil as the alter ego, which is in accordance with the beliefs of the hermetic sciences. In Goethe, Faust is an exceptional figure; in my version he is just an ordinary person. Mine is a civil version of the myth that presents an archetypal situation: I was sucked in from the outside. I discovered a form of animated speech in the course of shooting, through the translation from the puppet to the real actor. It was not in my original script but once I'd discovered it I decided to use it for all these scenes. It is also connected to the cabbala, where the vowels are much more prominent"

◀ source for his own version was his childhood memory of performances by travelling puppet players. The Marlowe play was not revived in Britain until the late nineteenth century but since then has served as the basis for over 40 films. Thus Svankmajer's new work is part of a twentieth-century obsession with the Faustian theme, which has now taken on the notion that the price to be paid for overreaching desires and ambitions involves what Freud identified as the three subjects of daydreams: power, sex and fame.

Goethe's interpretation of the Faustian hero is a Romantic one, emphasising the individual torment of the man and turning him into a tragic figure. Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*, while sympathetic to the ambitious intellectual at its centre, had a strong pantomime aspect and the exuberant special effects typical of pre-Shakespearian theatre. Svankmajer's version is quite different, providing a series of Fausts who imply that within the contemporary world, all of us are capable of being manipulated by the demons of chance and petty ambition.

Mephistopheles and Helen – in many ways the tragic figures of Svankmajer's version of the tale – are presented as life-size marionettes. Faust himself lacks any sense of overweening ambition and seems driven as much by curiosity as by anything more malign. From Marlowe's brilliant scholar and Goethe's tortured being, we arrive at Svankmajer's shabby bureaucrat, a quietly desperate, Kafkaesque figure willing to take his pleasures where he finds them and located firmly in modern-day Prague. Svankmajer's Faust is a flaneur whose wanderings lead him by way of a strange map to a place where he can extend his life, albeit in a tawdry setting where the theatre enacts its perpetual charms. In many ways this is also a film about the artist and the strange netherworld of the theatre wings, from which in a short step on to the stage all is transformed, sometimes irrevocably. Goethe's version of the play begins with a discussion between a theatre director, a poet and a comedian, indicating perhaps that this aspect of Svankmajer's vision has its roots in Goethe.

Figures such as Dee and the cabbalists may well attract those who have been marginalised, whose values are actively suppressed. As a Surrealist artist in Stalinist Czechoslovakia, Svankmajer may have identified with this secret society with its own hermetic codes, symbols, rituals and beliefs. In their time, Dee, Faust, alchemists, Mannerists and Surrealists were all subversive elements who championed ideas – philosophical, social, political and aesthetic – which considered community alongside scientific endeavour, and freedom, intellectual and otherwise, as crucial to any social ordering. Svankmajer's film of *Faust* perhaps expresses his identification with those earlier times which seem to serve more and more as a model for our own. His next planned film is a version of *Bluebeard*, another myth with deep resonance in European culture. We must wait to see how he again connects the fears, desires and aspirations such myths seek to articulate with our present-day reality.

'Faust' opens at the ICA, London, on 23 September

Hailed as a wunderkind, damned as a bad boy auteur, Alex Cox now lives in Mexico. He talks about his new film 'Highway Patrolman' and his passions to Nick James

HIGHWAYS AND BYWAYS

Expatriate directors from John Huston to Luis Buñuel have mined the rich seam of black humour in Mexican subject matter. And it was always set to appeal to someone like Alex Cox, an ex-punk raised on the films of Sam Peckinpah, especially after the cruel joke of his transformation from Hollywood hotshot director of *Repo Man* (1984) and *Sid and Nancy* (1986) to becoming one of *Variety*'s Missing Persons in 1992. BBC *Moviedrome* viewers may feel that Cox is the ex-pat who never went away, but in fact he has spent the last few years living in Mexico City and finding his way around Mexican film output. So much so that he has now made a film in Spanish with a Mexican cast that draws on the Mexican Highway Patrol genre, which, as he describes it, easily matches *Repo Man* for deadpan weirdness.

"These movies feature big muscular cops with big moustaches whose families get murdered early on. The hero then devotes himself to tracking down the killers. Usually the family is picnicking in the woods and, as often happens in films, the woods are populated exclusively by homicidal maniacs. I saw one of these films recently, *AR15*, in which, when the cop's family gets killed, he keeps their bodies, sets them around the dinner table and talks to them – the rotting corpses of his family."

Despite its name, Cox's *Highway Patrolman* (*El Patrullero*) is deliberately unlike such lurid genre films. Its genesis, of course, is typically off-the-wall. With the best of maverick intentions, Cox set out to make a Monte Hellman/Rudy Wurlitzer-style road odyssey. But his long-time collaborator, writer/producer Lorenzo O'Brien, had other ideas, and the script ended up as much a domestic tragi-comedy as an existential paean to being and nothingness. To add to the confusion, Japanese investor Cable Hogue Co Ltd was convinced it should be a samurai film. Long-standing interaction between Western and samurai traditions notwithstanding, the end result bears little relation to either *Yojimbo* or *A Fistful of Dollars*.

New recruit Pedro Rojas starts out with the best intentions of upholding the law, but soon finds that the pressures of the job erode the correctness instilled by his training. By humiliating turns he is demoted, compromised and wounded. Harried by his wife for more money, he becomes involved in corruption and an intimate relationship with a junky prostitute. Then his car breaks down as he is called to assist his best friend and co-recruit Anibal, who is being attacked by bandits. Hobbling over the hill on an injured knee, he arrives just in time to witness Anibal's last breath.

As Cox tells it, the tragic absurdity of life in the Mexican Highway Patrol – a private corporation run by two men known only by their code names of Dragon and Puma – unified the various interests of the film's makers. O'Brien's script was based on conversations with an ex-officer, and the material he gathered proved as mordant and strange as anything the usual generic twists might throw up. All parties now see the movie as the story of the domestication of a road warrior, with a comic twist.

Fascist Hollywood

Highway Patrolman is Cox's first completed feature since the debacle over *Walker* left him with a reputation as a "bad boy auteur" who "convinced Hollywood that he couldn't be trusted". An important movie for its director, it is also reckoned to be the most expensive film made in Mexico to date. What gives it immediate charm is the vulnerability of Roberto Sosa (*Under the Volcano*, *Gringo Viejo*, *Salvador*, *Cabeza de Vaca*), who plays Pedro. Cox says he got the part because he was the best actor, but his afflictions are given greater comic weight by his lack of stature. In Sosa's hand, an armalite rifle or a 45 automatic looks massive, while the fierce pride with which he stands to attention only makes him look more ridiculous next to the beefy sergeant in the training scenes. Yet we never stop believing in his essential seriousness as a cop.

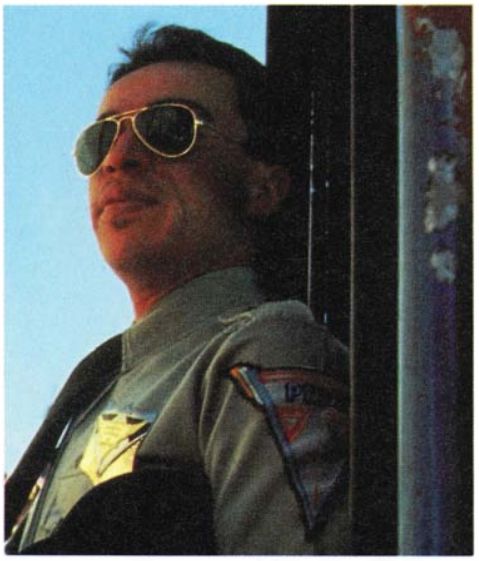
Sosa's presence among a top-notch cast is one of the reasons why *Highway Patrolman* was so big-budget by Mexican standards; another was the cost of creating a whole new fictitious corporation. Cox and O'Brien had assumed they would receive the same kind of assistance from the authorities as the genre movies do: "They usually give cars, helicopters, uniforms. But when Lorenzo turned up for the meeting – he kept me out of it, because I was the gringo – the head of police psychiatry was there. This guy was really on Lorenzo's case. He asked: 'Are you a homosexual? Did you hate your father?' These cops couldn't work out why Lorenzo had written a film like this. The psychiatrist said: 'Here's a scene in which the officer shouts at his wife. None of our officers shout at their wives.' When Lorenzo asked how he knew that, he said: 'Because we have a whole unit set up to deal with domestic violence.'

"In the end the deal we struck with Dragon and Puma was that we would create a false police force. So the designer, Cecilia Montiel, set up an artificial unit with its own uniforms – though it's obviously supposed to be the Federal Highway Patrol. When I saw *AR15*, I thought 'How can they approve this film and not mine?' Then I realised that although he's quite mad, the hero of *AR15* remains a macho policeman, dedicated to bringing criminals to justice. One of the things against us was that Pedro is a weaker character than some of the women he encounters. And there is no identifiable antagonist. Throughout the film Pedro is looking for someone to arrest, someone to punish, and in the end all he can do is shoot a 15-year-old boy. This probably did not appeal to the cops' sense of machismo."

Cox himself was always drawn to the work of macho directors and at one time his persona seemed as much a validation of machismo as a critique. At the time when, in *Variety*'s words, "he had the look of a *bona fide* wunderkind", he was fond of wearing stetsons and cowboy boots in studied imitation of the eccentricities of film-making heroes such as Peckinpah, Hawks and Huston. He made the Spaghetti Western parody *Straight to Hell* in 1986 as a virtual prank, casting musician friends and boozing buddies such as Shane MacGowan, Joe Strummer and Elvis Costello. As well as the usual fund of anecdotes, interviewers would be treated to lectures about the fascist nature of Hollywood.

In the seven years since completing *Walker*, Cox has become more willing to accept his own faults and has adjusted his political perspective accordingly. Just what happened on the set of that movie is still a matter of contention, but there were certainly "rumours of excessive behaviour by the director" and the completion bond company was on the brink of taking over when shooting ceased. The script was loosely based on the true story of the invasion of Nicaragua by mercenaries led by the eponymous American adventurer (Ed Harris). As Cox explains it, however, the content was not the primary political consideration.

"Ten years ago Lorenzo and I both believed in the possibility of political change because we



Discreet charm of the patrolman: Roberto Sosa as Pedro

had seen *The Battle of Algiers* and *The Mattei Affair* and we thought, 'Yeah man, you can make a film that makes a difference.' *Walker* was our attempt to do that. What was important for us was to go and spend hard currency in Nicaragua and to try to attract as much media attention to that place as possible, in the belief that in some way we would do some good. The subject matter came afterwards. But we were wrong, we were completely defeated. Not wrong to do it – after all we did generate positive publicity and we spent between $2 and $3 million of Universal Pictures' money – but it didn't make any difference to the political realities in the end.

"If I hadn't done *Walker* and had done *RoboCop* or *iThree Amigos!* or some of the other great films that were suggested at the time, then my career could have gone a different way, I could have become Adrian Lyne. I feel more sympathetic to people like Lyne and the Scott brothers now than I did then because ultimately we're all manipulated, we're all working for one big corporation or another. But if you're spending $80 million of a studio's money you're under a lot more pressure than if you're spending $1.5 million from a Japanese trading company. It's always a hard row to hoe."

Taking stock of a career like Cox's isn't easy. As well as his tendency to seek out wildly different subjects, there's a sense in which the expert raconteur can overshadow the filmmaker. The many unrealised projects he has been associated with sometimes sound more tantalising than the films he completes. Apart from *RoboCop* and *iThree Amigos!*, there was an unnamed motorcycle movie due to be made after *Repo Man*; a couple of Rudy Wurlitzer scripts, *Into a Desert Place* and *Zebulon*; a movie set on the beaches of Spain about a war between British and German tourists entitled *The Battle of Torremolinos*; and most recently a plan to film Richard Eyre's National Theatre production of *Richard III* with Ian McKellen, Malcolm McDowell, Jeanne Moreau, Richard Harris and Anjelica Huston, a project that may yet happen.

Despite its considerable qualities, *Highway Patrolman* is much less glamorous. But Cox argues that it follows directly in the tradition of *Repo Man*: "The element of continuity in my films is that they all come from documentary sources. *Repo Man*, although it has much madness in it, is essentially the story of the job. It was based on interviews I did with a car repossessor in LA. *Sid and Nancy* is also based on interviews, and *Walker* comes from documentary material. Of course, Lorenzo's concerns – with both the domestic life of these people and the question of whether or not it is possible to do good – are his own."

Ultimate macho

What is new about *Highway Patrolman* is that Cox shot the whole film in the long-take style of his favourite Mexican director, Arturo Ripstein. The rule was that he would cut away only if there was a time or a geographic change. One shot, the scene where Pedro finds Anibal, involved the concealment of 50 people on a desert road while the cameraman rode on the bumper of a truck before getting down to pursue Pedro into the desert scrub, where a trail of blood leads him to his friend. This method is a direct contradiction of the film-making syntax established by Griffith and Eisenstein, but Cox insists that it's a much more interesting way of working.

"It was a direction I started to go in while I was making *Walker*, but I backed off because I was afraid it would be too difficult. The best shot in that film is a very long take where Walker and his mercenaries get caught in a house. They're surrounded, everyone is shooting at them, but Ed Harris just sits down at the piano and doesn't get shot. At the time I thought I should use that technique again, but I went the safe way instead. But all this master, close-up, over-the-shoulder stuff takes longer in the end. The day goes by and you're into a 13-hour stint because the sun has gone and you're trying to recreate the light for the matching close-ups. Everyone's tired and the actors aren't doing their best work. The long-take method requires a greater degree of discipline and cohesive effort, but everybody likes it more."

Cox is now in Los Angeles putting the finishing touches to a feature-length adaptation of Borges' story *Death and the Compass*, originally shot as an hour-long drama for the BBC and broadcast last year. In typically *ad hoc* fashion, the film has been extended from the point of view of one character simply because that was the only actor available. For Cox, the immediate future will almost certainly involve him in other such low-budget strategies. It's hard to see how low-key experiments like *Highway Patrolman* could ever put him back on the players' map, but it's to his credit that he remains committed to seeking out the more bizarre corners of film practice, and that he retains his sense of wonder at cinema in general, and at the vivid qualities of Mexican production in particular. As for the anecdotes, you just can't stop them.

"I looked at some films by Camilio Fernandez, who was an actor. I knew him because he always played the bad guy in Peckinpah movies, but he was also a highly regarded film director of the 40s and 50s. The ultimate macho, famed for his grandiose and dangerous qualities, he once shot one of his producers dead. But I saw a film of his called *Rio Escondido* and it's an incredibly feminist film with a strong female protagonist. All the men in it are either complete wimps or monsters and there's this woman who... well, she's nuts, but she wants to leave the city and go to a small town and start a school to teach the poor children to read and write. There, of course, there's a rich landowner who wants to rape her, but she kills him. It's astonishing. Here was a guy with ten wives, drunk all the time, walking around with a pistol and yet his films were the absolute contradiction of who he was."

'Highway Patrolman' opened on 19 August and is reviewed on page 45 of this issue

What pleasures does a James Cameron movie provide? How has he developed his relationship with Arnold Schwarzenegger? And what kind of world does 'True Lies' present? By José Arroyo

CAMERON AND THE COMIC



Watching James Cameron's films, I sometimes experience what I imagine the Lumières' original audiences must have felt: a mixture of disbelief and delight, and a sense of wonderment at the magic of the movies. *True Lies* has several such moments, my favourite being the scene in which Arnie, on horseback, gallops after evil Aziz (Art Malik), who is on a motorcycle. The chase takes us through busy streets, a hotel lobby, up an elevator and across tall buildings. It is silly stuff – but silly stuff is rarely so thrilling.

Spectacle films don't rely on the same types of realism as genres such as domestic comedies, but verisimilitude nonetheless remains an important criterion. We know that Arnold Schwarzenegger isn't actually flying the jet in *True Lies*, yet if we could see how the effect was constructed (by detecting the matting, morphing or miniatures, for example), our pleasure would be lost. Part of the joy of Cameron's films (and this applies even to *Piranha II: The Spawning*) is that they trick us so well.

Critical response to *True Lies* has so far been mixed. My local newspaper in Montreal awarded the film only two stars, recommending that audiences wait until it is released on video – as ridiculous a piece of advice as one is likely to get. The film offers many pleasures (humour, romance), but perhaps the greatest, the one unavailable on video, is what the bulk of its reputed $120 million budget was spent on – the creation of particular kinds of spectacle (luxurious sets, exotic locations, huge boys' toys, high-speed chases, dramatic shoot-outs and extravagant explosions) whose enjoyment is predicated on widescreen viewing and increased by audience participation. Unlike *La Totale!* (the 1991 French film directed by Claude Zidi on which Cameron's work is based), whose effects are not diminished on a small screen, *True Lies* is a film to see at the movies.

A comparison of *La Totale!* and *True Lies* can probably tell us much about the specificity of French and American national cultures (and also their common features; both films are sexist and anti-Arab, albeit in different ways). But such a comparison also points up some of the characteristics of the contemporary big-budget American spectacle film, Cameron and Schwarzenegger's speciality both in their previous collaborations (*The Terminator* and *Terminator 2: Judgment Day*) and in the rest of their individual *oeuvres*. Watching *La Totale!* reminds us that *True Lies* is a type of cinema rarely feasible outside Hollywood. Smaller national cinemas cannot afford and do not have similar access to cutting-edge special effects technology (much less the opportunity to develop it with particular films in mind, as Cameron did for *The Abyss* and *Terminator 2*). Only Hollywood can maintain an infrastructure which keeps employed personnel skilled in a wide range of narrowly specialised areas of film-making.

In both *True Lies* and *La Totale!*, a couple, happily married for many years, find their marriage in trouble. The wife (Helen Tasker, played by Jamie Lee Curtis in Cameron's film) is approaching middle age and longs for excitement at least once in her life. She does not know that her husband Harry (Schwarzenegger) has lied to her throughout their marriage and is in fact a highly glamorous secret agent rather than the boring nine-to-fiver she believes him to be. Her would-be paramour Simon (Bill Paxton) is also lying to her: while trying to seduce her by posing as an agent and taking credit for her husband's exploits, he is in fact a used-car salesman. By the end of the film, the husband has neutralised the competition and recruited the wife into his organisation. Working together, they keep their marriage spicy and their country safe.

True Lies and *La Totale!* not only share this almost identical plot (and a subplot about Arab terrorists stealing weapons and wanting to blow things up), but the former also borrows situations, props and even lines of dialogue from the latter. Yet the two films belong to different genres (or perhaps more accurately deploy different combinations of elements from various genres), and indeed to different modes altogether. *La Totale!* mixes elements from the picaresque sex comedy, the domestic melodrama, the buddy-cop film and the spy film. But as one would expect from the director of *Les Ripoux*, the film's primary aim is to make the audience laugh. *True Lies* mixes elements from the screwball comedy, the domestic melodrama (both films are family romances), the buddy-cop film (the Tom Arnold-Arnold Schwarzenegger relationship can be read as a twist on that of Mel Gibson and Danny Glover in the *Lethal Weapon* films), and the spy film (though the spectacular elements and hero's panache are drawn more specifically from the big-budget Bond movies). But as one would expect from the director of *Aliens*, the film's primary aim is to provide spectacle that will thrill, chill and awe the audience.

The comic elements in *True Lies* are successfully realised, but though they are sometimes combined with spectacle, they most often alternate with it, just as the film switches between the domestic and public spheres, and push the narrative forward. The first scene in the film is an action scene; the last a comic one. Both feature a tango. At the beginning Schwarzenegger dances with the sexy Asian villainess (Tia Carrere); by the end he's dancing with his all-American wife. Their marriage is saved, the United States is free of Arab terrorists, the former suitor is made to pee in his pants at the feel of a lipstick and the hero and heroine tango into the night. *True Lies* may just be an embroidered *La Totale!*, but the embroidery is so extensive and skilful as to constitute a different object.

Mixing disbelief and delight: Arnold Schwarzenegger as the man with the double life in James Cameron's spectacular new film 'True Lies', the latest of their boys' adventures

Gazing at Batman

All Cameron's films to date have been like comic books (he is presently in pre-production for *Spiderman*). This is meant as a compliment. Science-fiction literature has a long history of depicting fantastic imaginary worlds which are rendered legible (and 'realistic') to audiences through recognisable structural relationships (racial differences among species, for example) and analogy (space as the new frontier). Unlike literature, however, comics create concrete visual representations of these imaginings; they literally draw them out for us.

The best comic books endow their characters with an impression of movement. Action scenes are carefully constructed to make the most fantastic feats appear possible (as a child I used to gaze for hours at *Batman* comics thinking that if I bent my knees just so and twirled around a flagpole, I too could leap between skyscrapers). This care with movement is extended throughout the form: characters are given movement within and across panels and panels are juxtaposed so that the narrative moves throughout the page and from page to page. Comics have great flow – as do Cameron's films.

It is no secret that comic books are heavily indebted to cinema: they too rely on a type of *mise en scène* and montage to tell their stories and create their effects. But in the case of Cameron, the borrowing is reversed – the resemblance between the monsters in *Aliens* and the extraterrestrial brood who used the X-Men as human hosts is uncanny, while Charlton Heston in *True Lies* is a dead-ringer for Nick Fury. Like comics, Cameron's films give concrete visual expression to fantastic worlds or things through careful *mise en scène*: his action scenes are fluid and detailed and the use of inserts and close-ups gives impossible stunts a human logic. And the likeness goes further.

Marvel comics such as *X-Men*, *The Amazing Spiderman* and *Daredevil* depict a corrupt world characterised by conflict between species (as in *Aliens*); rampant and ruthless corporate interests which value profit over human life (the hotel owner in *Piranha II*, the corporate flunky in *Aliens*); stupid and careless government representatives (*The Abyss*, *Terminator 2*). As in Cameron's films, narration in Marvel comics alternates between spectacular action and a troubled domestic sphere in which surrogate families are created as alternatives to traditional ones and as a buffer to troubled love relationships – 'families' that are glimmers of utopia in otherwise dystopian worlds. Like Cameron's heroines, those in Marvel, by grace of their powers and intellect, tend to be equal to male heroes and generally superior to ordinary *homo sapiens*.

Cameron's films, like most comic books, construct imaginary worlds and render them believable, but with greater intensity, a greater impression of movement, and on a bigger canvas. This is usually accompanied by a critique of corporations (if not of capitalism *per se*), an interrogation of traditional gender roles and flashes of insight into what it might mean to be human in late capitalism. But if Cameron's previous movies are like comic books, *True Lies* is merely cartoonish.

True Lies is a disappointing Cameron film. It is too thin and long and too focused on its show-off, showcase scenes. Those sandwiched in between, skilfully directed as they are, are like stale filling. The jokes and explosions dazzle, but ultimately can't hide the film's shallowness. *True Lies* has little to say and most of that is unpleasant, to say the least.

The representation of Arabs reinforces many negative stereotypes: they are wealthy, devious, hyper-emotional and ultimately incompe- ▶

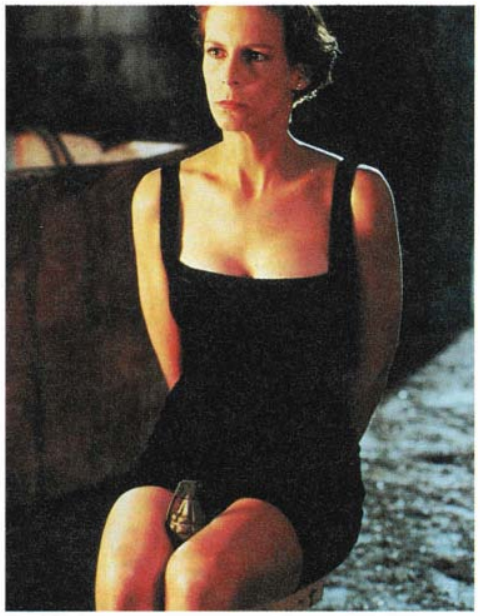
◄ tent. Their function is to be held up for ridicule so the audience can laugh, and even applaud, as they are systematically eliminated. The film tries to buy a license for this type of representation by having an Arab as one of the minor good guys – as if one computer nerd could compensate for reams of racism.

Cameron's previous movies have been critical of the established order, but *True Lies* simply affirms it. For instance, the family is usually an impossible ideal in Cameron's work – much longed for and highly valued, but out of reach. His characters end up making their own 'families' the best way they can. At the end of *The Terminator*, Linda Hamilton rides alone into the sunset, gun in her lap, ready to prepare her son for a post-nuclear future. In *Aliens* Sigourney Weaver becomes a surrogate single mother for Newt, partly to compensate for the death of her biological daughter (and I don't remember any mention of a father either). In *Terminator 2*, a cyborg is presented as the ideal parent. Even in *Piranha II* – which ends with a freeze-frame of the reunited family clinging to each other after the defeat of the mutant piranhas – Tricia O'Neil and Lance Henriksen (protagonists and parents) live independently, socially and sexually, for most of the film.

The family in *True Lies*, however, is an updated version of *Father Knows Best*. Mom may now work, but she still bakes birthday cakes and has supper ready on time. Dad's preoccupation with his job makes him a little absent-minded, but he always has the best interests of his wife and little girl at heart and always comes through for them, proving his love by saving their butts. *True Lies* perpetrates astonishing emotional violence in the name of the traditional nuclear family. As Harry Tasker, Schwarzenegger can eavesdrop on his wife, stalk her through the city, kidnap her and even lock her up for questioning. All this is excusable because it proves Mrs Tasker is faithful and thus helps keep the family together.

True Lies also affirms traditional gender roles. One of the most disturbing and telling scenes has Schwarzenegger interrogating Jamie Lee Curtis. He is with his colleague (Tom Arnold) behind a two-way mirror; she is a prisoner, target of masses of surveillance equipment that records and analyses her every gesture. The editing alternates between shots of Curtis and Schwarzenegger and of Schwarzenegger and Arnold, interrupted occasionally by close-ups of a featureless video image of Curtis, a visual lie-detector device. A woman is on trial for being a sexual person and her face, her greatest marker of identity, is denied her. She will be freed only when she passes the boys' test.

Marital problems have been another favourite Cameron theme, a fertile context in which the domestic and the quotidian can intersect with the fantastic. In *The Abyss*, for instance, Ed Harris is saved from drowning because he keeps open his escape route by means of the wedding ring he had previously thrown down the toilet; the spectacular descent into the ocean depths is the setting for the couple to speak freely to each other again and to admit to their feelings. But *True Lies* presents an adolescent picture of marriage: a boring



Knockabout role: Jamie Lee Curtis as the frustrated wife

union can be saved if the pair are shot at and hang from helicopters. Schwarzenegger is contrasted with short, slobby Tom Arnold to lead us to conclude that to be a good husband is to be tall, macho and jealous (although Arnie also 'cares'). We are literally told that used-car salesman Simon is not competition for Arnie because he has a smaller penis. The Asian villainess (there was no such character in *La Totale!*) exists only as a counterpoint to Jamie Lee Curtis – the bad girl who makes Jamie Lee look good. The film kills her off so Curtis can appropriate some of her badness and become even better (a sophisticated sex-bomb and faithful wife) by the end of the movie.

Jamie Lee Curtis' role as Helen Tasker is written much as in the French film, but she does more with it than Miou-Miou. The latter is good as the mousey bourgeois housewife, but her transformation into a sleek secret agent is less convincing. There is a scene in both films where the women have to pretend to be prostitutes. Miou-Miou simply turns around her dress and rearranges her belt, but Curtis' transformation is a star moment. She rips the ruffles off her black dress, pushes out her bust, sleeks her hair back with water from a vase and becomes Jamie Lee – The Body. She then turns around and, back in character, wobbles wonderfully on her high heels. Curtis can scream like a stereotypical bimbo, knock Arnie out, do pratfalls and still look elegant. And she is an excellent partner for Schwarzenegger.

Humanising Arnie

True Lies doesn't meddle with Schwarzenegger's star persona the way *Last Action Hero* did, but simply adds another facet. As another step in the carefully constructed career project of humanising Arnie, it presents him as emotionally and physically vulnerable (though only to his wife) as never before.

Thanks to his celebrity as a body-builder, Schwarzenegger had a persona before he was in movies; he starred in movies (*Hercules in New York*) before Bob Rafelson formally 'introduced' him in *Stay Hungry*; and the *Conan* movies had already made him a star before he hooked up with Cameron in *The Terminator*. But the Cameron film was the first Schwarzenegger movie to be awarded the kind of critical reception and academic interest that helps turn a commercial sci-fi spectacle into a contemporary classic. *The Terminator* continues to be a top video renter and aspects of the cyborg have remained central to Schwarzenegger's persona.

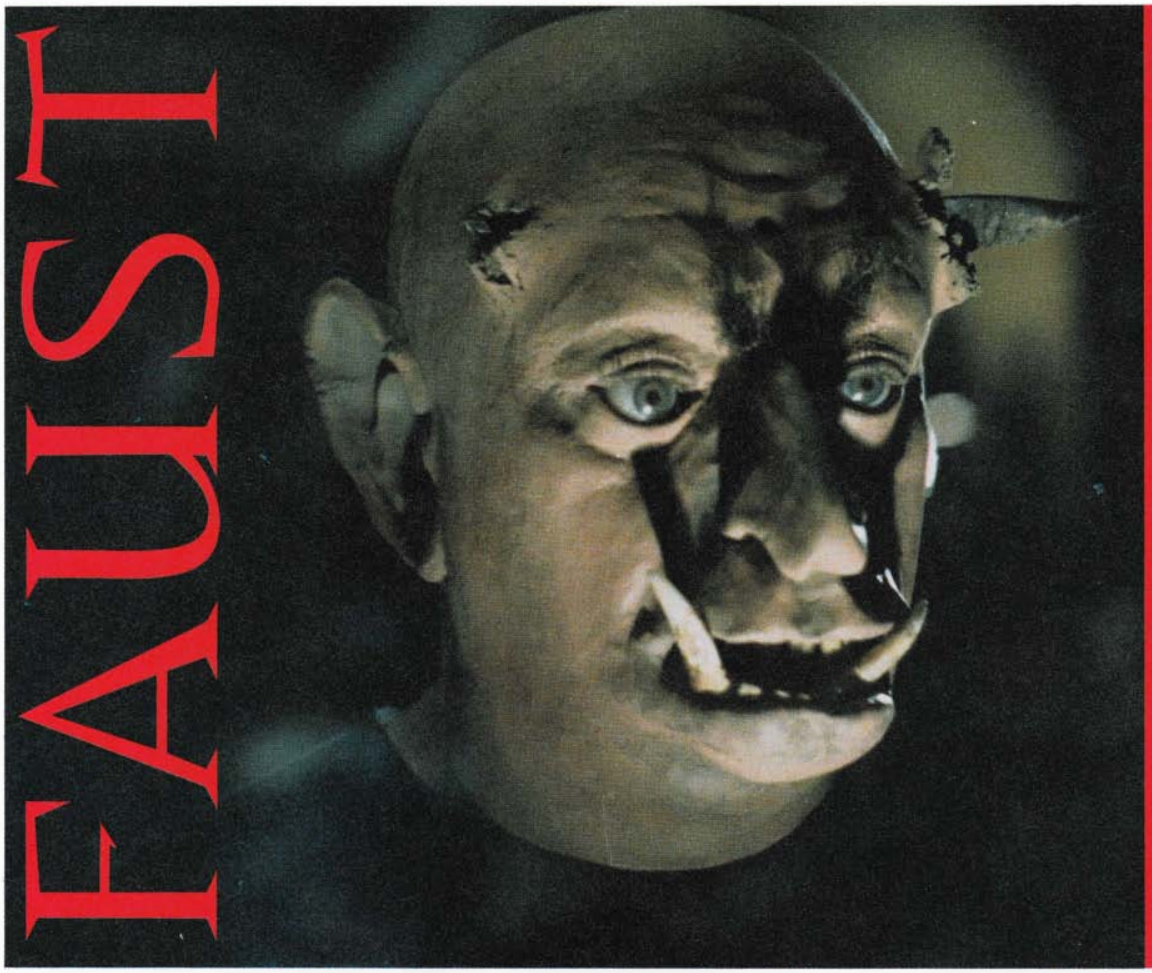
In his early films, because body-building has connotations of gayness, Schwarzenegger's heterosexuality had to be continually asserted, while his ethnicity also had to be explained. This was done in different ways: by making him a foreign body-builder (*Stay Hungry*, *The Jayne Mansfield Story*), by placing him in mythological settings (*Conan*, *Red Sonja*) or by giving him as little dialogue as possible (all of the above, plus the rest). In terms of coupling, he was sometimes estranged from his partner (*Raw Deal*) or paired with Amazons or women of colour (*The Running Man*).

Every film enlarged on his persona (particularly his comedies) and these impediments have now been overcome. His body, which often used to elicit laughter and derision, is now an ideal to many, while he is also widely perceived as American as apple pie. In *True Lies*, he is an American working for a secret government organisation and his body, until now his trademark, is kept pretty much under wraps. Yet the film knows when to leave the persona alone. For instance in *La Totale!* Arnie's character has two children, one of them a son engaged in an Oedipal conflict to assert his own identity. Against Schwarzenegger, who would dare?

Schwarzenegger's entrance in *True Lies* is revealing. We see someone in the water but we can't see the face. When it bobs to the surface, we see a high-tech mask reminiscent of some alien or cyborg. Then the face is unmasked and it's Arnie. He plants his equipment and bombs, takes off his wetsuit and uncovers a tuxedo. For the next ten minutes Arnie dances a tango, handles computers, speaks many languages – he's James Bond. But we also know the suaveness hides savagery – under the tuxedo there is also Conan and the Terminator. For the rest of the film, the Terminator is married, has a child and is vulnerable, insecure and jealous. Harry Tasker is as much a cartoon as any character Schwarzenegger has played, but Cameron allows his actor's various cartoon images an airing at different points in the film and offers him a few more single dimensions. It is a brilliant use of the persona – similar to the way new artists and writers bring new life to established comic-book characters.

In a recent television documentary, Dirk Bogarde said that stars could get by with one look. Schwarzenegger now has more than that, but his jaw-clenched glare is still a trademark, and *True Lies* uses it cleverly. We know he can kill anyone with a blow and that the blow generally follows the glare. In *True Lies* sometimes it does and sometimes it doesn't; audiences at my screening enjoyed it either way. *True Lies* might not be good Cameron, but it is good Schwarzenegger. Racist, sexist and shallow, it is escapism into a white boys' fantasy land.

'True Lies' opened on 12 August and is reviewed on page 49 of this issue



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CENSORSHIP INSIDE STORIES

What has drawn Elizabeth Newson into the video violence debate? Beatrix Campbell and Judith Dawson explain

Elizabeth Newson has become one of the most visible professors of the decade. In part it was her paper, 'Video Violence and the Protection of Children', commissioned by David Alton MP in support of his proposed amendment to the Criminal Justice and Public Order Bill, that allowed the popular press to claim that self-critical experts now adopt a pro-censorship position. But condemnation of Professor Newson's position is not enough. The film community and the media academics who have been bruised by her arguments need to understand what connects her campaign on video violence to her participation in that most contested battlefield of the 90s – child abuse.

Elizabeth Newson's considerable reputation as an expert on childhood began over three decades ago with studies undertaken with John Newson of 700 Nottingham families over 30 years. Much later, in 1989, the pair published fascinating findings on smacking and slapping which concluded that corporal punishment encouraged aggression – more than 70 per cent of 20-year-olds with a criminal record were found to have been hit at least once a week when they were young children. The Newsons did not extend their work to a study of child abuse, an area which in recent years has destabilised both professional and political discourses. Almost anyone involved with children has been challenged over the past two decades by evidence of widespread abuse which has been missed or misinterpreted. The Newsons have published no papers on the subject.

In any event, their expertise has been widely called upon. They appeared in the biggest child sexual abuse case of the 80s, in which nine adults in Nottingham were jailed for cruelty and sexual abuse of their children. The case was a watershed in the history of child protection, an "outstanding" example of "child protection" practice according to Nottinghamshire's chief executive, and praised by the prime minister. The culture of the abuse was designated as "satanic" in judicial findings, a view which has been upheld by Appeal Court judges. But this interpretation has been repudiated by Nottinghamshire police, who launched a campaign to discredit the evidence of the children and their carers. The police view was supported by John Newson's idea that the children had been either brainwashed by social workers (despite the fact that social workers conducted no interviews with the children) or influenced by evangelical Christians. Neither of these explanations has been accepted by judges who have scrutinised all the evidence, yet their involvement in the case gave the Newsons a profile as experts in subsequent debates.

In 1990 Elizabeth Newson appeared as an 'expert witness' in the Rochdale ritual abuse controversy on behalf of parents associated with a family whose children were judged to have been abused. She cited only two references in her evidence, one of them to Benjamin Rossen, who campaigned against accepting children's evidence in a child abuse case in the Netherlands. Newson did not refer to the opposite view, written up in professional journals by the doctors who cared for the children, or to the eminent, and sceptical, psychologist commissioned by the Dutch government. Nor did she comment on Rossen's support of paedophilia, which has been widely reported in the Dutch press, and his membership of the editorial board of *Paedika*, a "journal of paedophilia". She has given no sign of being anxious about this stance as the background for Rossen's advocacy on behalf of accused adults.

Accused parents in the Rochdale case floated a theory linking the children's evidence to horror videos they had watched. But an expert witness for the Official Solicitor argued that the children were able to distinguish between fact and fantasy, were clear that their discussion of these videos alluded to what they had seen rather than what had happened to them, and that the themes of the children's disclosures were different from those of the episodes which were supposed to have influenced them. Mr Justice Brown was unconvinced, however, and was persuaded by the evidence of Newson and another expert, Valerie Mellor, that material from the videos may have featured in the children's stories. Newson invokes this judgment in her discussion paper on video violence: children's familiarity with violent videos "misled social workers into assuming that they must have experienced such things in reality".

The decade of discovery about the dangers of childhood has become the decade of dangerous children. And in demonising children, our collective concern has been directed away from the evidence of widespread abuse by adults. Newson's evidence has contributed to this process. Her paper on children and video violence is anchored in the murder of Jamie Bulger by two ten-year-old boys. Here she claims that the new factor in the "situation which this murder has forced us to examine" – the dangerousness of children – is not abuse, neglect and poverty, but "the easy availability to children of gross images of violence on video". Why video? Why



Margaret Ford of the BBFC on the new book, 'Censored'

In his introduction to *Censored*, Tom Dewe Mathews tells us that the history of censorship is the history of censors. This may well be partly the case, for the personalities and interests of the chief censors over the 80 years of the British Board of Film Classification's existence have greatly influenced its policies. But these were also men of their times, and the history of censorship is much more closely related to the history of society and to the changes in manners and morals within shifting political, cultural and economic patterns than it is to individual whim, however powerful.

Child's Play 3

All institutions must change over time or lose the trust of those they serve. Dewe Mathews argues that the time has come for censorship in Britain to be left to the courts of law. In the process, he has much fun at the expense of our sometimes pompous and class-prejudiced predecessors, while we present-day censors must laugh somewhat ruefully, knowing that we may look equally foolish in the eyes of posterity. But to understand censorship and classification practices requires a deeper and more rigorous analysis than the narrow model Dewe Mathews presents. If even the most liberal regimes around the world retain film classification and censorship bodies, perhaps this is because of a recognition that freedom of expression carries with it certain responsibilities. No one's freedom should encroach on the rights and freedoms of others, especially those too young or vulnerable to choose for themselves. Modern censorship practices are an attempt to balance these freedoms and responsibilities while remaining responsive to changing attitudes in society.

This attempt to maintain a balance has been put severely to the test since the Jamie Bulger case and another case in which the video *Child's Play 3* was cited. Despite the fact that the Home Office spokesman in the House of Lords has now stated unambiguously that there was no police evidence to link either murder with this film, it has now achieved a notoriety far beyond its power to frighten or distress. Its symbolic power is immense: on this single video rests the future of classification and censorship in Britain. And our colleagues in Europe report similar concerns; Holland has now abandoned the plans it had to dispense with state censorship altogether. So while it is possible to brush aside the more hysterical outpourings of the tabloid press and to deplore the lack of intellectual rigour on the part of some academics, there is at the heart of this debate a kernel of public disquiet – and it makes Dewe Mathews' anti-censorship arguments out of step with the times.

The government has responded to public pressure by introducing its own amendments to the Criminal Justice and Public Order Bill, now likely to be on the statute book by the autumn. For the first time, many of the BBFC's practices in relation to video will be enshrined in law and it must be able to demonstrate that it has had regard to the harm that may be done to potential viewers or, by their behaviour, to society, by the manner in which the work in question deals with criminal, violent, horrific or sexual behaviour, or illegal drugs. These are matters which any media regulator must take into account, and the BBFC uses these criteria every day in deciding what is suitable for a particular classification. More problematic are the definitions of "potential viewer" and "harm".

Unlike the cinema, where admissions by age can be controlled, there is evidence that many children have ready access to 18-rated videos. The BBFC's job will be to determine even more closely which films require extra vigilance. The film itself usually provides the clues about the audience it addresses, but its appeal is often determined by the surrounding press and publicity, which can appear many months after classification is made. It is difficult for anyone to say how successful a film will be, and therefore how attractive a younger audience will find it. Even more problematic is the question of "harm": it is obvious that a video containing a sequence showing how to construct a home-made bomb could cause harm to society, but are we now to predict, say, that a film featuring a mechanical doll might one day be linked to a particularly unpleasant murder case and therefore refuse it a certificate? Only time and the courts will be able to judge if we get it right.

Who is this for?

There is more that can and is being done, however. Before the furore provoked by David Alton earlier this year, the BBFC had already decided to reorganise its examining operation. Part of the remit of its new full-time team of examiners is to encourage an exchange of information between the BBFC and video consumers. A programme of visits to video shops has begun and there are plans for a panel of viewers to be drawn on from surveys or discussion groups and for visits to various parts of the country to talk with parents and children. We want to foster grass-roots accountability, to test acceptability of decision-making and to give consumers a chance to contribute to the formation of policy. Alongside this initiative, the BBFC will continue to run a more structured research programme, investigating the relationship between the viewer and the screen. Of course none of this means that the BBFC intends to abrogate its responsibilities by becoming a consumer-led body, but it must always ask the question, who are we doing this for?

Dewe Mathews makes no bones about the fact that we are not doing this for him, and he recounts the sins and omissions of British censors with great relish, while compounding many of them with a flurry of errors and omissions of his own. The scholarly work on this subject has been done by James Robertson, Annette Kuhn and Guy Phelps, beside whom Dewe Mathews is the man with the peep-show machine.

'Censored' is published by Chatto and Windus

not violence by real, live people? Why wouldn't we want to contemplate what else had happened to hurt these children?

The video as the culprit emerged after Mr Justice Morland speculated on the impact of *Child's Play 3* on the two child-murderers. Newson failed to ask how come nearly 200,000 children who have seen this minor horror film on satellite television have not become killers, and instead concluded that violent videos desensitise children, eroding their capacity for compassion, and that repetitive viewing may make children mimic the video, depending on their stability and maturity. This scenario is directed mainly towards the working class, calling up an eternal middle-class nightmare of the lower orders lounging around on their vinyl furniture, grazing on a diet of chips and *Nightmare on Elm Street*. Newson confesses in her chronicle of her "ordeal by media" in the wake of her paper (*Psychologist*, July 1994) that "I did not consider" that neglectful parents came not only from "deprived families" and that "our own children are at risk from the pornography of violence in the houses of their middle-class friends."

So is children's violence caused by video images or by earlier experiences which may be excited by videos? Causation versus correlation dominated the Home Affairs Select Committee's examination of Newson and two other experts on 22 June 1994. Newson did not hesitate to assert her view that videos are causal. But Guy Cumberbatch, director of the Communications Research Group at Aston University, who has conducted the most exhaustive studies of the links between violence and videos, told the committee: "the evidence is not robust enough to draw the kind of policy implications that we desperately seek." And Kevin Barrett, the NSPCC's policy officer, said, "the available research on the link between the mass media, videos and violence in children is inconclusive." Newson's own contribution surprisingly contained no reference to other specialists such as Dr Eileen Vizard of the Young Abusers Project, who gave evidence in the Bulger case. Her view is that re-enactment of episodes in videos is unlikely, since "if videos have a role then it is one of a large number of factors. One must look at the whole jigsaw rather than take one piece out of context."

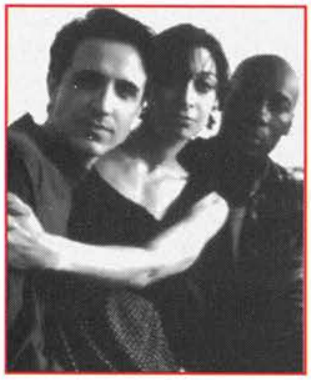
In 1993 Newson joined the board of the False Memory Syndrome Society, which promotes the belief that false 'memories' of childhood abuse have been put into adults' imaginations by (usually feminist) therapists. Here she again acts as an advocate for parents – this time those accused by their adult children of past abuse. As in all the other debates in this field, especially the high-profile controversy over video violence, the effect is to divert our attention away from allegations of adults' actual abuse of children. Demonising videos – whether as causes of children's violence to other children or as inspiration for children to 'lie' about their treatment at the hands of adults – will not protect children. The tragedy of Elizabeth Newson is that as someone who has devoted her whole professional life to children, the stance she has taken up carries the risk of directing attention away from how adults hurt them.

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Céline and Julie



Iain Softley, director of 'Backbeat', remembers life on the road, a pastoral idyll in France, and the delirium of Jacques Rivette's 'Céline and Julie'

No experience in the cinema can possibly match the impact of that first time. Hayley Mills in *Pollyanna*. I can still remember, as a four- or five-year-old, the shock of seeing a 30-foot-high giant girl projected on the cinema screen hiding behind an even more massive Christmas tree. Somehow, almost immediately, our imagination gets used to these incredible sights and that sense of a magic, almost supernatural phenomenon leaves us forever, but when I saw Jacques Rivette's *Céline and Julie Go Boating* (*Céline et Julie vont en bateau*), I experienced the thrill of discovery as if I was again seeing cinema for the first time.

I wasn't a movie brat. As a child I didn't go to Saturday morning cinema clubs. If I did bunk off school, it wasn't to sneak into a matinee performance at the local ABC, but to hang out in the listening booths of a record store sampling the latest album from Free, Bowie, or the Stones. Every spare second of the day was spent playing football or listening to music. As a child of the 60s, a child in the 60s, the 1966 World Cup and pop music made England the coolest place to be in the world. In contrast, for some reason I got the idea that cinema was outdated, something people did in the 30s, 40s and 50s. I did see some films: Polanski's *Macbeth*, *Cabaret*, and the wonderful *Harold and Maud*, but these were exceptions. For the most part my friends and I spent our weekends going to gigs and parties, getting inside (and out of) our heads. It still chills me to think of all the great films I missed out on first time round.

Listening to too much 70s hippie music and reading Jack Kerouac and D. H. Lawrence had given me an unhealthy fascination with life on the road and an overdeveloped romanticism. I wanted to be an artist, so I wrote to my university, said I didn't want to come yet and packed off to France with some paints and brushes and the intention of writing a novel. I was a forerunner of that current-day Los Angeles phenomenon of the AMW – actor, model, whatever. I was an AWW – an artist, writer, whatever. I painted a bit and I didn't get very far with the novel, but that was the time when I saw *Céline and Julie*.

After an ill-fated flirtation with a pastoral idyll in rural France – rats in the bedroom, 12 thundering hours a day on a combine harvester – I retreated to a cushier number in Paris, giving English conversation classes and doing a bit of painting and decorating. When chatting to the mother of a pupil one day, the extent of my cinematic ignorance became clear. With Gallic indignation she seized a copy of *Pariscope*, circled about 20 films that I had to see if my soul was to stand the slightest chance of being saved, and sent me out of the door with directions to a cinema where *Céline and Julie* was showing. Before the film had ended I had decided that I wanted to be a film director.

Céline and Julie is the story of the chance meeting in Paris between two women, a dissatisfied thirtysomething and a cabaret magician, and the fantasy life they invent and inhabit together. Céline and Julie make alternate visits to a haunted house on the outskirts of Paris. After each visit the one who went to the house recounts to the other what she saw, or rather they hallucinate the events together, and we the audience see them. At first these hallucinations appear like fragments of a partially remembered dream, but as the film progresses they gradually expand to a coherent story.

The two women are hilarious and the movie is as entertaining as it is enchanting. Indeed, Susan Seidelman made *Desperately Seeking Susan* as a homage, wanting to make a film about two women in New York having as much fun together as Juliet Berlo and Dominique Labourier were having in Paris. In fact, *Desperately Seeking Susan* owes more to its antecedent than that suggests. The chase scene where Rosanna Arquette follows Madonna and the magic cabaret Madonna performs are both taken directly from *Céline and Julie*.

What struck me most about the film was its portrayal of fantasy as something that was interchangeable with reality. When I left the cinema I had the sense that the film wasn't over, but that I was still in it. For the first time after seeing a film, the world looked a different place. I was, of course, able to walk through the same Parisian streets and squares where the film had been photographed, but it was more than that. Here was cinema that worked on more than a literal level, which questioned notions of 'time' and the 'real world' not in a dry, theoretical way but as a delightful sensual romp. As an 18-year-old I was drawn to anything which challenged and turned upside down the established world, but I was responding to something in the film which I still crave today.

Perhaps it is because we are condemned to live under overcast skies for so much of the year that as a nation we have a lamentably undeveloped visual sensibility. This is most evident in the almost universal assumption that modern architecture is bad and all abstract art could have been done by a five-year-old, unless it can command a multimillion pound price tag. This is the same culture where the strongest insult you can hurl at someone is that they are arty.

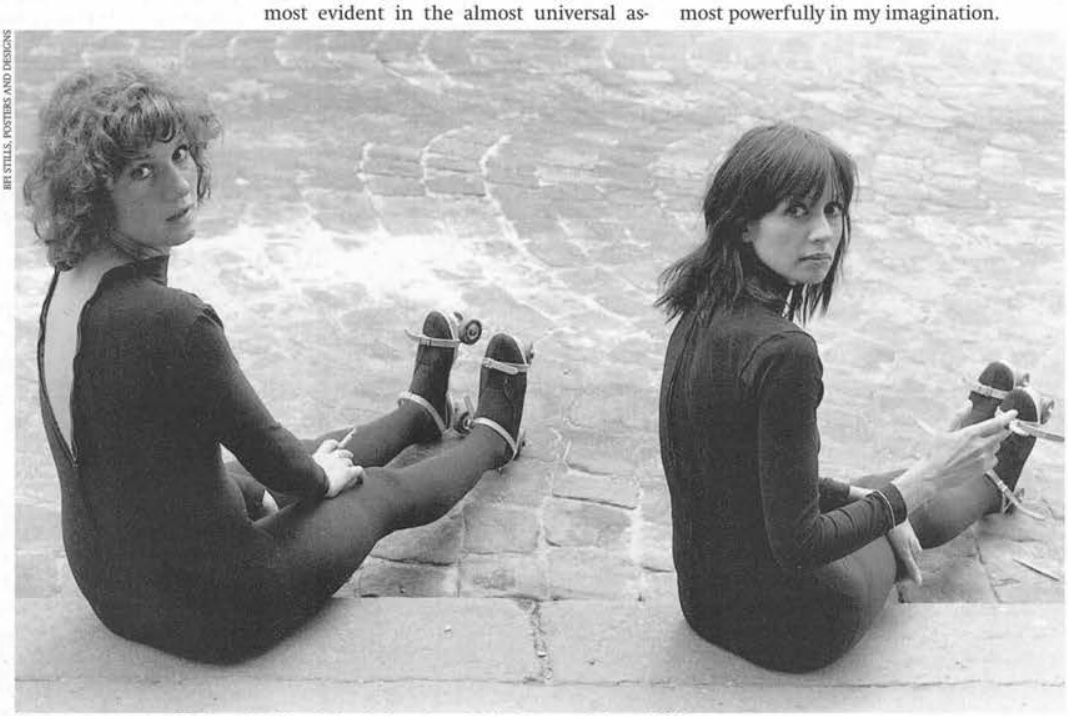
This Anglo-Saxon suspicion of colour, passion, ritual and myth is, I think, reflected in our cinema, which is why football and pop music, which often embody these qualities, had such an appeal. *Céline and Julie* was the first time a film had grabbed me in this way. It worked on a non-naturalistic level and could be enjoyed for the hedonistic sensuality of the experience for its own sake.

From the moment of that first viewing, my appetite for cinema became insatiable. I started to make up for lost time, and with each film I saw I became less intolerant and even came to enjoy naturalistic films. But cinema for me is still at its most enjoyable when it is most dreamlike.

The next time I saw *Céline and Julie* was a year later at Cambridge University. I spotted a notice advertising a midnight screening of the 3½-hour film and bought 20 tickets at 50p a time. I went into our college bar at closing time and got rid of all the tickets by raving about the film to anyone who would listen. Settling down in the screening room I had second thoughts about the wisdom of my evangelism; perhaps there was still time to divert the half-drunk half-stoned rabble to the screening of *Emmanuelle* next door. But despite long breaks between reels, and perhaps because of their chemically altered states, the audience entered the film's curious dreamworld, and I survived the experience without being lynched.

That was 15 years ago. I haven't seen *Céline and Julie* since, it plays only rarely, even in independent cinemas. I sometimes wonder if it will still be an obsession for me, or if like that other first film, *Pollyanna*, it lives most powerfully in my imagination.

BFI STILLS, POSTERS AND DESIGNS



Chance encounters of the best kind: Dominique Labourier and Juliet Berto as Julie and Céline

books

Girl trouble

B. Ruby Rich

Where the Girls Are: Growing Up With Mass Culture
Susan Douglas, Times Books, $23, 340pp



BFI STILLS, POSTERS AND DESIGNS (2)

Woman's dream or man's nightmare: the 60s US television series 'Bewitched' acted out a version of Pandora's box which helped to turn girls growing up into feminists, top right

For some time now, the jarring experience of feminist forays into the mass media has induced disappointment, if not despair, in those who still feel any identification with the adjective 'feminist' or any investment in the conjunction of a much maligned political tendency with the cynical field of mass infotainment. According to current standards, only ex-feminists, complicit feminists, or crackpots can be accorded pride of place in the officially sanctioned national discourse. Camille Paglia and Kate Roiphe rule; Susan Faludi, who sent shock waves through the media establishment by dispassionately providing evidence of its anti-feminist bias, is a singular exception. As for those legions of intelligent, articulate women with analyses and ideas worth hearing – they are relegated to the margins of discourse represented by specialised journals (*Feminist Studies*, *MS*, *Women's Review of Books*, columns in *The Progressive*) and then criticised for failing to address a wider public. Talk about blaming the victim.

It's a surprise and a pleasure, then, to find an academic such as Susan Douglas on the roster of Times Books, writing in a most readable mass-market style on the perils and pleasures of popular culture. And doing so from an unapologetically feminist position that dares to claim the most 'retrograde' forms (television, rock 'n' roll and so forth) of not only the 70s, but the 60s and 50s as training grounds for future feminist subversion and gender insubordination.

Where the Girls Are is a serious study, sprung from the intersections of cultural studies, sociology and women's studies, written by a professor, journalist and scholar of broadcasting history and pitched at a popular readership (no trade jargon or theory-speak, perky photographs). The beauty of Douglas' project is its simplicity: once there was a nation of good little girls who memorised banal rock 'n' roll songs about boyfriends and dances, and then grew into radical feminists who suddenly and inexplicably did not want to be oppressed any more. Douglas, who has an interest in autobiography and reception theory, suspected there might be a link, rather than just a flurry of contradictions, between these stages of consciousness.

Douglas is a master of the time-line, the index that connects concurrent events at different levels or in different fields, fine tuning her juxtapositions so that previously ignored connections become clear for the first time. Examining the post-war US baby boom, she discovers a call for gender parity in the rhetoric of Cold War competition. American politicians and educators cited a wartime-like necessity to admit girls into full participation – in order to compete with "Sputnik". Even the most normative of American histories takes on radically new feminist meaning when filtered through the Douglas lens.

Analysing the influence of Jacqueline Kennedy on American girls emerging from the 50s, for instance, Douglas cites her sophistication, language fluency, knowledge of art and literature – and her giant feet, another kind of relief for girl children emerging from the Mamie Eisenhower decade. And she reminds us that the decades changed at precisely the moment when post-war capitalism in the US created the teenager and, with the new instrument of television, organised a generation into a market. (Douglas even does a nouveau feminist take on the JFK-Marilyn Monroe dalliance, brashly if not quite convincingly arguing that Monroe's suicide sounded a death knell to the old-fashioned victimisation of women, with Jackie's ascendancy a sign of the New Woman.)

In general, the Douglas nerve pays off, rereading the mainstays of US popular culture in terms of a 90s acknowledgment of the power of subjective appropriation. "The truth is that growing up female with the mass media helped make me a feminist, and it helped make millions of other women feminists too." Extending the girl-group literature, she argues that the likes of the Shirelles and the Ronettes represent a golden era of "advice music" when female singers offered songs of warning and encouragement to teenage girls. She revisits Beatlemania from the point of view of empowerment, contending that young American women used fandom as agency and shaped the post-Elvis songsters in their own interests: to redefine gender.

Analyses and assessments of television and its shifting representations of women within both news and entertainment programming are the heart of Douglas' enterprise. Her re-reading of 50s and 60s television is a veritable return of the repressed, hauling into the daylight those hideous shows that I, for one, so eagerly forgot. *Queen for a Day* was the number one daytime television show. It ran from 1955 to 1964 and, week in week out, rewarded the most tear-jerking story of womanly woes (measured by a studio audience applause meter) with a fix-it package of consumer goods. Douglas describes the show as a spectacle of female masochism, then riffs on the pernicious Disney empire that literally animated masochism and narcissism as quintessential female traits.

Douglas has great fun tracing television's attempts, as women began to change, to both reflect and contain the evolution. *Bewitched* and *I Dream of Jeannie* are her preferred series, for in their weekly episodes "a new version of Pandora's box was acted out". It is immensely satisfying, too, that Douglas never analyses her television texts in a vacuum: the birth control pill was approved by the FDA in the US in 1964, the same year that *Bewitched* debuted and became the number two show, giving *Bonanza* a run for its money with its weekly fusion of "a woman's dream and a man's nightmare".

Where the Girls Are makes a signal contribution in another arena, too: the recovery of statistics and primary data. Douglas does a superb job of retracing the media's response to the women's movement from 1968 through to the present. She has excavated transcripts, researched magazine assignments and traced television personalities and their positions to illustrate how thoroughly the news media (print and television) stigmatised and ridiculed both the movement's politics and its participants, especially in the pioneering days, and how easily feminists could be typecast as desirable or undesirable. In a way, she conducts the kind of analysis found in Isaac Julien's *Black and White in Colour* or Marlon Riggs' *Color Adjustment*. Howard K. Smith, smirking and dismissive ABC news anchorman, is unearthed. Eric Severaid at CBS is quoted saying the movement spread "by contagion". Yet despite the best efforts of these male commentators, Douglas astutely points to the news coverage itself as a form

of "secret commercial" that widely disseminated such powerful images of women in revolt that they overrode their editorial frame to inspire women viewers.

When it comes to the 80s, Douglas quickly finds that "sisterhood was out, competitive individualism was in". So was the catfight, found everywhere from *Dynasty* to the news coverage of the Raisa Gorbachev-Nancy Reagan summit meeting. In a text that moves smoothly from the Twist to Laura Nyro to *Charlie's Angels* to Madonna, there are bound to be some missteps. Douglas is at her worst with Hollywood films, tending to flatten out the complexities she defends elsewhere. Her vigour when she spots the smoking guns of pop culture has its downside when she doesn't, but tries anyway to finesse the failure. Worse yet, she is prone to the universalising trap of the first person plural, obscuring race and class differences and genuinely assuming that every reader shares her own experience of these songs, dances or television shows.

The wonder is that many of us do. And even those who don't will emerge the wiser after reading Douglas' indispensable book, ready and willing to return to the television set with renewed incredulity, eager to see what new social message might be wheeled into position as the pick of the week.

Gargoyle's grin

Peter Matthews

Polanski
John Parker, Victor Gollancz, £18.99, 287pp

It's always a temptation to read an artist's work in terms of his or her life, but with Roman Polanski it seems almost an obligation. This is perhaps the major difference between Polanski and that earlier 'master of suspense' Hitchcock. The latter was by all accounts a fairly twisted character, but the obsessive subtext lurking beneath the surface kinks of his films has largely been a matter of critical conjecture. Polanski belongs to a less decorous era, and his movies do not leave you in much doubt. How, asked Pauline Kael in 1972, could one look at "the knives, the slain servants, the bloody, mangled babies" in his *Macbeth* except as a reflection of his wife Sharon Tate's horrific murder in 1969? And how, regarding the ravished innocent of *Tess* or the sultry nymphet of *Bitter Moon*, can one forget that Polanski still faces charges in America for the rape of a 13-year-old girl?

So is the director a tormented soul who uses his films as a form of public exorcism? Or is he a crafty self-promoter, willing to exploit his own notoriety as a somewhat unseemly commercial tease? John Parker's biography asks some excellent questions, and it is not entirely his fault that he comes up empty-handed. Evidently Polanski did not co-operate, and as for the ex-lovers and so-called friends who did – well, to know Roman apparently is to hate him. Words like "unbearable" and "animal" crop up frequently; and none is sterner or more judgmental than his former Polish colleagues, left beavering away at Lodz film school while their compatriot was picking up Ferraris and *Playboy* bunnies in the west.

One might assume that Polanski's capitulation to the 60s 'liberationist' lifestyle was the predictable outcome of a youth spent under the thumb of Communism. And one might sensibly attribute the cruel and macabre comedy of his films to an even darker period when he crawled through the sewers of Krakow, narrowly surviving. But no, those moralistic Poles insist, his wartime experiences were not that unusual – if he grew into a rat, he has no one else to blame. Polanski's first wife, Basia Kwiatkowska, views the films as largely self-induced nightmares (she ascribes their misogyny to his lifelong revenge on her for leaving him). Only a westerner, the Poles imply, goes hunting for complexes when sheer nasty-mindedness will do.



Tormented soul or slick salesman: are Polanski's films a testament to survival or exercises in self-promotion?

In his way, Polanski agrees with them. He has rarely expressed remorse, and never once sought 'counselling', even in his blackest moments. Should we accept him, then, pretty much as we find him – fascinated by morbid and psychotic states, but cleanly detached from and in control of his own voyeuristic imaginings? There are a few things that set the analytical antennae quivering. Why, for instance, the occasional penchant for drag (*The Tenant* and the early short *When Angels Fall*)? Why must Polanski torture his actors (he calls them his "monkeys") in take after gruelling take? And why does his fanatical perfectionism send each film hugely over budget, as if he were deliberately spoiling his chances for the next?

Parker is not short on possible Rosebuds, but they tend to peter out in a mass of equivocal theories. It could be argued that Polanski's clinical approach to horror (as in *Repulsion*) is motivated by denial; yet it could just as easily be seen as a sign of health. Personally, I've enjoyed being scared by a number of his films, but I've never believed in their flashier claims. The gargoyle's grin that seals *Chinatown* or *Rosemary's Baby* – the gloating triumph of madness and evil – strikes me as pure salesmanship, exactly pitched to the time and public mood. It may be the surest proof of Polanski's basic soundness that, for all he's been through, he has never lost his slick.

Legal eagle

Mark Shivas

Dealmaking in the Film and Television Industry: From Negotiations to Final Contracts
Mark Litwak, Silman-James Press/ Samuel French, $23.95, 346pp

Billy Wilder said the American Academy should make a new category – an Oscar for Best Deal of the Year. He complained nearly 20 years ago that "today we spend 80 per cent of the time making deals and 20 per cent making pictures." He was right even then. How much more so now. The business of putting together feature films, television films and series is so drawn out and complex that either the deal takes so long to conclude that there's no energy or incentive left to make the picture, or I feel that I've made it already.

My life – and probably my bank balance – would have been healthier had Mark Litwak's book come along before I became an independent film-maker. Although I can read contracts without a red mist forming before my eyes (I have an indifferent law degree and learnt all about Yousupoff versus MGM at college), I would have possessed an easy guide through current entertainment law that it has taken me ten years to assimilate.

Dealmaking is an American book and deals with aspects of the law that, alas, Britain does not afford us – the Fifth Amendment and rights of privacy, for instance. We could do with a UK version, but until that comes along, this is an entertaining, sometimes witty account of the pitfalls of the movie business. Litwak, who has a law office in Santa Monica, gives a history of the American film industry in a clever five-page introduction and provides definitions, check lists, contract formats and sample litigation – the latter including such choice cases as Blaustein versus Burton (*The Taming of the Shrew*), Desny versus Wilder (*Ace in the Hole*) and Gilliam versus ABC (*Monty Python*).

In the last case, the plaintiffs were Monty Python, who retained copyright in their scripts produced by the BBC. Nothing in the agreement allowed the BBC to alter the scripts once they were recorded. The corporation sold the US distribution rights to Time Life with the license to edit and add commercials. ABC then obtained the rights to broadcast two 90-minute specials, each compiled from three 30-minute programmes. After editing for commercials and offensive behaviour, the original 90 minutes ran only 66. The Pythons claimed that showing a truncated version of their work impaired the integrity of their copyright and asked for an injunction. They won it on the grounds that the BBC did not have the right to broadcast a truncated version and therefore was not in a position to grant such prerogatives to ABC.

Art Buchwald, Dashiell Hammett, Ginger Rogers and Woody Allen figure in these pages, but *Dealmaking* is not just a star vehicle. It doesn't pretend to do away with the necessity of consulting lawyers, only to help non-lawyers to understand legal issues, "enabling them to communicate better with their attorneys" (Litwak's fax and phone numbers end the preface!). So besides the drier stuff, we are given common sense advice. For example, in 'Orchestrating the Release' Litwak offers five pointers. The first two made me cheer aloud: "Don't show your film until it is finished. Executives may ask to see a rough cut. They will say 'Don't worry. We're professionals, we can extrapolate and envision what the film will look like with sound and titles.' Don't believe them. Most people can't extrapolate. They will view your unfinished film and think it amateurish. First impressions last." And: "Invite executives to a screening; don't send them a videocassette. If you send a tape to a busy executive he will pop it in his VCR. Ten minutes later the phone rings and he pushes the pause button. Then he watches another ten minutes until he is interrupted by his secretary. After being distracted a dozen times, he passes on your film because it is 'too choppy'." You'd be amazed at the number of producers and directors who don't follow this advice.

Finally, the further reading list is invaluable. And the glossary alone is almost worth the purchase price. It is blunt. Under 'A' he describes the auteur theory as complete nonsense to anyone who has worked on a movie, while under 'B' the phrase "between projects" is succinctly translated as "out of work".

reviews

Reviews, synopses and full credits for all the month's new films and selected re-releases

Baby's Day Out

USA 1994

Director: Patrick Read Johnson

Certificate
PG
Distributor
20th Century Fox
Production Company
Hughes Entertainment
For 20th Century Fox
Executive Producer
William Ryan
Producers
John Hughes
Richard Vane
Co-producer
William S. Beasley
Production Supervisor
Christine A. Johnston
Unit Production Manager
William S. Beasley
Location Managers
Bob Hudgins
2nd Unit:
Demetra
Diamantopoulos
2nd Unit Director
Freddie Hice
Assistant Directors
Doug Wise
Randy Suhr
Scott Delsener
2nd Unit:
James Giovannetti Jnr
Aimee Kohn
Casting
Janet Hirshenson
Jane Jenkins
Voice:
Barbara Harris
Screenplay
John Hughes
Script Supervisors
Jan Evans
2nd Unit:
Lori Allen
Director of Photography
Thomas E. Ackerman
2nd Unit Director of Photography
Steve Yaconelli
Camera Operators
David Parrish
George Kohut
2nd Unit:
William Birch
Visual Effects:
Patrick Sweeney
Optical:
James C. Lim
Steadicam Operator
Janice Arthur
Special Visual Effects
Industrial Light & Magic
Visual Effects Supervisors
Michael Fink
Industrial Light & Magic:
John Knoll
Perpetual Motion Pictures:
Richard Malzahn
Visual Effects Producers:
Kimberly Sylvester
Mark S. Miller
Co-ordinators:
Mara Hamilton
Tina Gonzalez
Ginger Theisen
Editors:
J. W. Kompare
Michael McGovern
Art Director:
Mark Moore
Optical Co-ordinator:
Lisa Vaughn
Line-up:
Jennifer Lee
Tim Geldeman
Graphics
Ted Haigh
Computer Supervisor:
Doug Smythe
Executive in Charge of Digital Effects
Thomas A. Williams
Digital Matte Artist
Paul Huston
Motion Control Operator
Michael Karp
Editor
David Rawlins
Production Designer
Doug Kraner
Art Director
Joseph Lucky
Set Design
Henry Alberti
Richard Fernandez
Robert Goldstein
Masako Masuda
Eric Orbom
Randy Wilkins
Set Decorator
Beth Rubino
Set Dresser
Troy Borisy
Illustrators
Carl Aldana
Robert Consing
Joseph F. Griffith Jnr
Thomas W. Lay Jnr
David Negron Jnr
Set:
Jacques R. Rey
Book:
Ross MacDonald
Model Supervisor
John Goodson
Special Effects
Co-ordinator:
Michael Wood
Supervisors:
David Wood
James Reedy
Mechanical Effects
Rick Baker
Costume Design
Lisa Jensen
Wardrobe Supervisor
Keith Lewis
Make-up
Linda Melazzo
Special Effects Make-up
Ken Myers
Hairstylist
Linda Rizzuto
Title Design
Deborah Ross
Film Design
Titles/Opticals
Pacific Title
Music/Music Conductor/Orchestrations
Bruce Broughton
Music Editor
Patricia Carlin
Song
"This Is the Army, Mr Jones" by Irving Berlin
Sound Design
Gary Rydstrom
Supervising Sound Editor
Richard Hymns
Sound Editors
Dialogue:
Sara Bolder
Michael Silvers
Gwen Yates-Whittle
Mix:
Ethan Van der Ryn
ADR Editor
Hugh Waddell
Foley Editor
Sandina Bailo-Lape
Sound Mixers
Ronald Judkins
Music:
Armin Steiner
Foley Mixer
Chris Boyes
Foley Recordist
Jana Vance
Sound Re-recording Mixers
Gary Summers
Gary Rydstrom
Sound Effects Editors
Teresa Eckton
Ken Fischer
J.R. Grubbs
Ruth Hasty
Foley Artists
Dennie Thorpe
Tom Barwick
Stunt Co-ordinator
Freddie Hice
Film Extracts
Twelve O'Clock High (1949)
Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid (1969)

Cast
Joe Mantegna
Eddie Mauser
Lara Flynn Boyle
Laraine Cotwell
Joe Pantoliano
Norby LeBlaw
Brian Haley
Veeko Riley
Cynthia Nixon
Gilbertine
Fred Dalton Thompson
FBI Agent Grissom
John Neville
Mr Andrews
Matthew Glave
Bennington Cotwell
Adam Robert Worton
Jacob Joseph Worton
Baby Bink
Brigid Duffy
Sally
Guy Hadley
FBI Agent
Eddie Bracken
Old Timer
Kenneth L. Jordahl
Raymond Henders
Jim Foley
Jack Baird
Oscar Carr
Old Soldiers
Dan Frick
Bus Driver
Robin Baber
Big Woman
John Drury
Anchorman
Jennifer Say Gan
Ronnie Lee
Dawn Maxey
Teenager
Megan Haffey
Baby
Roslyn Alexander
Woman in Cab
Manny Sosa
Taxi Driver
Anna Thomson
Mrs McCray
Jenna Pozzi
McCray Child
Erika Leigh Blackwell
Schoolteacher
Neil Flynn
William Holmes
Cops
Don Rimgale
Warren Rice
Hard Hats
Tim Schueneman
UPS Man
Sandra O. Rogers
Woman in Apartment
Kirsten Nelson
Woman in Park
John Alexander
Gorilla
Jurgen Heimann
Tom Hester
Mark Setrakian
Marc L. Tyler
Puppeteers

8,891 feet
99 minutes

Dolby stereo
In colour
DeLuxe

A summer morning in the countryside outside Chicago. Baby Bink Cotwell is preparing for the day ahead. His nanny reads him his favourite story, 'Baby's Day Out', his father goes off to work and his mother Laraine gets him ready for a newspaper photo shoot. Eddie Mauser, Norby LeBlaw and Veeko Riley, three small-time hoodlums, turn up at the house pretending to be the photographers. Eddie hoodwinks Laraine into leaving him alone with Bink and then promptly kidnaps the toddler, making his exit through the window. The three men and the stolen baby hide out in an apartment, demanding a ransom of $5 million. However, when Norby falls asleep, Baby Bink climbs out onto the fire escape and crawls toward the roof. The three give chase, but Bink eludes their grasp. For the rest of the day, Bink, recreating the events from 'Baby's Day Out', hitches rides in shopping baskets, on buses and in taxis. He leads the hoodlums on a chaotic chase which takes them from department store to zoo before ending up on a busy construction site.

Meanwhile, Bink's parents have joined forces with local FBI agent Grissom and are searching the city for clues. They get nowhere, but the Nanny hears reports of various sightings of babies all over Chicago and realises that the locations correspond to those in 'Baby's Day Out'. She deduces that Bink's next port of call, if he goes by the book, will be the Old Soldiers' Home. Sure enough, Bink has crawled his way in to meet the elderly veterans. He is reunited with his parents. As he is being driven home, he makes gurgling noises and points out of the window. Grissom realises he is trying to reveal the whereabouts of his kidnappers. Following Bink's lead, they cordon off the street, surround the building and flush the hoodlums out. Back in his cot, Baby Bink looks at a new book, 'Baby's Trip To China'.

In a sense, *Baby's Day Out* is the picture that John Hughes has been building down to all his career. It was almost inevitable that after his long march backward through adolescence (the brat-pack movies) and prepubescent childhood (*Home Alone*) he would turn his attention to toddlers.

Polymorphously perverse and gleefully anarchic, babies make ideal leading characters in cartoons. One thinks, for instance, of Fleischer brothers yarns where Popeye has all sorts of unfortunate, and very violent, adventures in babysitting, or of the cigar-smoking, gun-toting gangster in the pram who bawls his way into various Bugs Bunny stories. What these cartoons acknowledge is the babies'



Back to play school: Joe Mantegna

potential for disruption: the tots may seem powerless and vulnerable, but given a chance, they'll turn into rampaging agents of destruction. Hughes and director Patrick Read Johnson set out to harness this infantile energy. In the course of the film, the three hapless kidnappers holding Baby Bink to ransom are spat upon, bludgeoned, walloped, set on fire, covered in cement and generally made to endure every sort of indignity a cartoon villain might be exposed to.

But the meshing of animation and live-action techniques is always difficult. There is a strong vein of sentimentality here which seems incongruous amid all the choreographed carnage. The villains are flesh and blood characters: it's more jarring than funny to see them at the receiving end of so much wanton violence. There is also a disturbing sense that they're being punished on account of their background. As blue-collar, working-class Americans, they're treated throughout as objects of ridicule whose habits and stupidity can be lampooned, and whose bodies can be battered. By contrast, Baby Bink's preppy, affluent parents are handled with kid gloves. Hughes' script celebrates consumption: Bink's palatial nursery, the country house where he lives, and Chicago's most exclusive department store are lovingly filmed: the city is reduced to an extended adventure playground for privileged toddlers.

This makes it all the more tempting to sympathise with the dispossessed hoodlums. The actors, at least, deserve our pity: Eddie Bracken, Preston Sturges' conquering hero, is made to play a doddering, senile army veteran who pulls faces for Bink's benefit; John Neville is condemned to that purgatorial role as English butler which seems to be foisted on all distinguished Shakespearian actors who go to Hollywood. Joe Mantegna, usually to be found snapping out David Mamet's elliptical dialogue, is reduced to mimicry and groans. He is even ritually emasculated: Baby Bink sets fire to the crotch of his trousers.

The premise of *Baby's Day Out* must have seemed a little risky – baby-snatching is not the most tasteful of themes. As usual, though, Hughes gives the material a sugary, bland coating. The movie broaches questions of class, snobbery and parenting without answering any of them. Ironically, it also paints a picture of domestic dysfunction: Bink's mother seems more concerned with getting his picture in the paper than with his well-being. His father is so preoccupied with work that he scarcely notices the toddler. Mom, pop and kid are all reunited in the final scenes, but any notions of happy families have to be treated with scepticism. As the film ends, Bink, back in his old, familiar crib, is already contemplating another adventure, leafing through a new book – 'Baby's Trip to China'. Whether or not this presages a sequel, it implies he is none too happy with life at home.

Geoffrey Macnab

Blank Cheque

USA 1994

Director: Rupert Wainwright

Certificate
PG
Distributor
Buena Vista
Production Company
Walt Disney Pictures present
An Adelson/Baumgarten production
Executive Producers
Hilary Wayne
Blake Snyder
Producers
Craig Baumgarten
Gary Adelson
Associate Producer
Charles Skouras III
Production Supervisor
Christa Vausbinder
Unit Production Manager
Charles Skouras III
Location Manager
Julie Duvic
Post-production Supervisor
Tamara Smith
2nd Unit Director
David R. Ellis
Assistant Directors
Michael Daves
Dennis Maguire
Seth Cirker
John E. Gallagher
Casting
Reuben Cannon
Associate:
David Giella
Texas:
Rody Kent
ADR Voice:
Barbara Harris
Screenplay
Blake Snyder
Colby Carr
Script Supervisors
Helen Caldwell
2nd Unit:
Marvel Wakefield
Director of Photography
Bill Pope
2nd Unit Directors of Photography
Don Reddy
Layton Blaylock
Camera Operators
Gregor Tavenner
2nd Unit:
Don Reddy
Steadicam Operator
Ralph Watson
Video/Graphic Displays
Video Image
Editors
Hubert de la Bouillerie
Jill Savitt
Production Designer
Nelson Coates
Art Director
Burton Rencher
Set Decorator
Cecilia Rodarte
Scenic Artist
Adele Plauche
Storyboard Artists
Eugene Yelchin
Mark Bristol
Special Effects Supervisor
Margaret Johnson
Special Effects
Randy E. Moore
Costume Design
Deborah Everton
Wardrobe Supervisor
Sonia Ooten
Make-up Artist
Katharina Hirsch-Smith
Hairstylist
Kelly Nelson
Titles/Opticals
Pacific Title and Art Studios
Music
Nicholas Pike
Orchestrations
Stu Balcomb

Music Editor
Michael Connell
Song Consultant
Dawn Solér
Songs/Music Extracts
"Money (That's What I Want)" by Berry Gordy, Janie Bradford, performed by Zendetta; "Wonderman" by Fred Fairbrass, Richard Fairbrass, Rob Manzoli, performed by Right Said Fred; "Happy Birthday" by Mildred J. Hill, Patty S. Hill; "Flava" by Jeff Carruthers, Michael Egizi, Lord G, "Gimme Back My Groove" by Robin Kreinces, Warren Rosenstein, performed by MMC; "Proud to be Loud" by and performed by Marc Ferrari; "I'll Wait" by Taylor Dayne, Shep Pettibone, Tony Shimkin, performed by Taylor Dayne; "I Want Candy" by Bob Feldman, Gerry Goldstein, Richard Gottehrer, Bert Berns, performed by Bow Wow Wow; "Wild Obsession" by Steve Diamond, Mick Criepps, Traci Gunns, Phillip Lewis, Kelly Nickels, Steve Riley, performed by L.A. Guns; "Heaven" by and performed by Rymes With Orange
Supervising Sound Editor
John A. Larsen
Dialogue Editors
Louis Creveling
David Grant
Daniel Melhase
Steve Scoville
ADR Editor
Tim Boggs
Foley Editor
Danielle Ghent
Sound Mixer
David Kirschner
ADR Mixer
Derek Marcil
Foley Mixer
David Torres
Dolby stereo consultant:
Dan Sperry
Sound Re-recordists
John Ross
Patrick Giraudi
Joshua Schneider
Paul Urmson
Sound Effects Editors
Craig Berkey
Mark Cookson
Lisle Engle
Craig Sadler
Foley Artists
Robert Friedman
Paige Pollack
Stunt Co-ordinator
Patrick Romano

Cast
Brian Bonsall
Preston Waters
Karen Duffy
Shay Stanley
James Rebhorn
Fred Waters
Jayne Atkinson
Sandra Waters
Michael Faustino
Ralph Waters
Chris Demetral
Damian Waters
Miguel Ferrer
Quigley
Michael Lerner
Biderman
Tone Loc
Juice
Rick Ducommun
Henry
Alex Zuckerman
Butch
Alex Allen Morris
Riggs
Debbie Allen
Yvonne
Michael Polk
Yvonne's Assistant
Lu Leonard
Udowitz
Mary Chris Wall
Betty Jay
Bernie Engel
Mr Appleton
Dorothy Layne
Mrs Appleton
Angee Hughes
Woman in Parking Lot
Mike Fairchild
Police Officer in Bank
Terry G. Mross
Eric Glenn
Truck Drivers
Gil Glasgow
Van Driver
Jason Tirado
Delivery Guy
Randy Moore
Maître d'
Greg Dial
Hired Guard at Party
Colom L. Keating
Cop at Party
Steve Shearer
Chauffeur Party
Randolph B. Stripling
Starla Benford
Lana Dieterich
Rick Perkins
Alfredo Huereca
Coquina Dunn
Party Guests
Turk Pipkin
Magician
Richard Dillard
Diane Perella
Guests
Joe Stevens
John Edson
Neighbours
Amanda Baumgarten
Girl at Amusement Park
Seth Corr
Boy at Water Park
Roger Fields
Bystander

8,388 feet
93 minutes

Dolby stereo
In colour
Prints by
Technicolor

US Title:
Blank Check

Eleven-year-old computer freak Preston Waters is bullied by his older brothers and kept short of pocket money by his work-ethic parents. Preston's feelings of deprivation, intensified by a no-money humiliation at a schoolkids' party in a local theme park, turn into a plan of action to raise a million dollars and buy his own house. He tries to open a bank account with his savings of 11 dollars, but is turned away kindly by bank clerk Shay. On his way out, his bicycle is flattened by a car belonging to ex-con Quigley, who has been visiting bank manager Biderman in order to forcibly organise a money-laundering operation. Quigley is anxious to get rid of Preston, and hurriedly gives him a blank cheque to pay for the damaged bike.

Preston can't resist the temptation to fill in the cheque for a million dollars, and takes it back to the bank to cash. He arrives minutes before Quigley's sidekick Juice arrives to collect his laundered cash, and Biderman hands the money over in a case of mistaken identity. Realising the error, the three set out to search for Preston. Meanwhile, Preston starts spending, inventing the alias Mr Macintosh to help him buy a house and hire a limo. His chauffeur proves an unexpectedly helpful companion, and joins in the games spree that commences.



Young investor of the year: Brian Bonsall

Shay, meanwhile, turns out to be an undercover FBI agent, and when Preston shyly asks her for a date on the pretence of arranging a meeting with the mysterious Mr Macintosh, she accepts. Preston next decides to hold a birthday party for Mr Macintosh, but realises in the middle of the celebrations that the money has run out, and everybody leaves. Quigley and his gang finally track the boy down, and while they are interrogating him, the FBI burst in. Quigley claims he is Macintosh to cover his identity, and is promptly arrested for handling stolen money. Preston finally returns home.

Although it purports to be a parable warning kids of the dangers of materialism and to "be careful what you wish for," *Blank Cheque* is as blatant a celebration of excess consumption as you're likely to encounter. The plot – mind-numbingly simple yet at the same time bizarrely complex – is an updating of *Risky Business*-style oh-to-be-an-adult fantasy, with a bit of *Indecent Proposal* moral philosophising chucked into the mix. The result, though, becomes increasingly peculiar as Preston Waters – the clued-up kid at the centre of things – indulges in his dreamed-of financial independence.

After, predictably enough, accumulating every toy, video game, and virtual reality machine available in America, Preston emerges from his buying spree attired like some overdressed party tot – in the sort of clothes that any sensible kid would give almost anything to avoid. Even weirder, he develops the hots for a comely bank clerk (who turns out to be an undercover Fed) and a 'date', arranged on behalf of Preston's adult alias, turns into a grotesquely inappropriate spectacle – not only does she turn up wearing the kind of gown normally reserved for perfume commercials, but the two end up waltzing sensuously among erupting fountains in a staggeringly overt piece of symbolism.

Whatever the deficiencies of the narrative, there is at least a clutch of decent performances that forestalls the film's descent into abject failure. Best of the lot, as the heavy, is Tone Loc who has clearly built up his role from a scripter's cipher into one of considerable comic impact. On the other hand, Rick Ducommun, who plays Preston's genial chauffeur chum, gamely tries and fails to emulate John Candy's boyish demeanour. You can't help but admire Brian Bonsall's spirit in the lead role, but the movie itself is such an awkward construction of spare parts that the energy he cooks up seems, inevitably, to go nowhere.

Andrew Pulver

Blown Away

USA 1994

Director: Stephen Hopkins

Certificate
15
Distributor
UIP
Production Company
Trilogy Entertainment Group
For Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer
Executive Producer
Lloyd Segan
Producers
John Watson
Richard Lewis
Pen Densham
Co-producer
Dean O'Brien
Production Co-ordinator
Christine A. Baer
Unit Production Manager
Dean O'Brien
Location Managers
Clifford T. E. Roseman
Ronald M. Quigley
Boston:
David Collins
Jeff N. MacLean
Location Co-ordinator
Boston:
Lori Hornung
Assistant Directors
Josh McLaglen
Christopher T. Gerrity
Xochi Blymyer
Casting
Michael Fenton
Allison Cowitt
Voice:
Barbara Harris
Screenplay
Joe Batteer
John Rice
Story
John Rice
Joe Batteer
M. Jay Roach
Script Supervisors
Julie Pitkanen
Renata Stoia
Director of Photography
Peter Levy
Special Macro Photography Design and Production
Gregory McClatchy
Film
Macro Unit Director of Photography
Greg Ramsey
Camera Operators
Krishna Rao
Alicia Weber
Stephen St John
Steadicam Operator
Stephen St John
Visual Effects
Out of the Blue
Visual Effects Producer
Dana Bickel
Visual Effects Supervisor
Stephanie Powell
Editor
Timothy Wellburn
Production Designer
John Graysmark
Art Directors
Steve Cooper
Lawrence A. Hubbs
Set Design
Robert Fechtman
Boston:
Barbara Mesney
Set Decorator
Peg Cummings
Storyboard Artist
Robb Bihun
Special Effects Co-ordinator
Clay Pinney
Special Effects Foreman
William D. Harrison
Costume Design
Joe I. Tompkins
Costume Supervisor
Joe McCloskey
Make-up Artists
Key:
Edouard Henriques
Steve LaPorte
Boston:
Maryellen James
Hairstylists
Key:
Steven Frank
Anthony Veader
Title Design
Nina Saxon Film Design
Titles/Opticals
Pacific Title
Music
Alan Silvestri
Orchestrations
William Ross
Music Supervisor
Happy Walters
Music Editor
Ken Karmen
Music Co-ordinator
Pilar McCurry
Songs/Music Extracts
"With or Without You", "I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For" by Paul Hewson, Dave Evans, Adam Clayton, Larry Mullen, performed by U2; "Tuesday Morning" by Peter Stacey, performed by The Pogues; "A Nation Once Again" performed by The Wolfe Tones; "Here's Where The Story Ends" by Dave Gavurin, Harriet Wheeler, performed by The Sundays; "All Night Long" by Curtis Reginald Lewis, "You'll Lose A Good Thing" by Barbara Lynn Ozen, performed by Aretha Franklin; "Return To Me" by Emile Adler, Julie Flanders, performed by October Project; "Darling Today" by Mark Olson, Gary Louris, performed by The Jayhawks; "Happy Birthday" by Mildred J. Hill, Patty S. Hill; "In The Morning" by Todd Park Mohr, performed by Big Head Todd and the Monsters; "Take Me Home" by Steve Kipner, Marc Jordan, John Capek, performed by Joe Cocker, Bekka Bramlett
Choreography
Liam Harney
Supervising Sound Editor
Bob Newlan
Dialogue Editors
Hugo Weng
Simon Coke
Duncan Burns
ADR Supervisor
Robert Heffernan
ADR Editors
Corinne Sessarego
Victoria Sampson
Beth Bergeron
Susan Dudeck
Bobbi Banks
Sukey Fontelieu
Jack Woods
Foley Supervisor
Donald Sylvester
Foley Editors
Nash Michael
Reuben Domingo
Production Sound Mixer
Thomas Causey
ADR Mixer
Thomas J. O'Connell
Foley Mixer
Bruce Bell
Music Scoring Mixer
Dennis Sands

Sound Recordists
Tony Jenkins
Pete Gregory
Foley Recordist
Peter Smolian
Re-recording Mixers
Chris Jenkins
Adam Jenkins
Mark Smith
Dailies Transfers Recordist
Karol Dodd
Sound Effects Editors
Chuck Michael
Steve Bissinger
John Edwards-Younger
Foley Artists
Kevin Bartnof
Ellen Heuer
Technical Advisers
Lieutenant Bob Molloy
Herb Williams
Technical Consultants
Boston:
Don Stewart
Mike Costello
Stunt Co-ordinator
Vince Deadrick Jnr

Cast
Jeff Bridges
Jimmy Dove
Tommy Lee Jones
Ryan Gaerity
Suzy Amis
Kate
Lloyd Bridges
Max
Forest Whitaker
Anthony Franklin
Stephi Lineburg
Lizzy
John Finn
Captain Roarke
Caitlin Clarke
Rita
Chris De Oni
Cortez
Loyd Catlett
Bama
Ruben Santiago-Hudson
Blanket
Lucinda Weist
Nancy
Brendan Burns
Kevin
Patricia A. Heine
Connie
Josh McLaglen
Ken Kerman
Prison Guards
David Hodges
Prisoner
Robert "Bobby Z" Zajonc
Alan Purwin
Helicopter Pilots
David Nowell
Helicopter News Cameraman
Dee Nelson
Mother
Judd Daniel King
Justin
Chris O'Neil
Boyle
Whitney Cline
Babysitter
Michael Macklin
Sara Edwards
TV Reporters
Evelyn Lee-Jones
Gospel Singer
Mark Berry
Motorcycle Cop
Faleena Hopkins
Irish Girl
Michael Reynolds
Larry Reynolds
Terry O'Shea
George Landers
John Farrell
Wedding Band

10,876 feet
121 minutes

In colour
Deluxe
Anamorphic

Psychotic terrorist Ryan Gaerity escapes from prison in Northern Ireland and escapes to Boston. There he sees news on TV of the heroic exploits of city bomb disposal officer Jimmy Dove. Gaerity knows that Dove's real name is Liam McGinley; 20 years earlier McGinley was involved in Irish terrorist bombing, until his conscience caused him to bungle a mission, causing the death of his sweetheart, Gaerity's sister. Gaerity is bent on revenge; meanwhile Dove, increasingly disturbed by his memories, has decided to move from active duty to a teaching post, to marry his violinist girlfriend Kate and be a father to her child Lizzy.

Halfway through their wedding party, the bomb squad members present are called out to deal with an explosive device, which in a supposedly controlled detonation kills one of their number. Finding out that it had been planted with this purpose in mind, Dove wants to return to work until the bomber is found. Another bomb kills two more disposal experts, and in the midst of the carnage, Gaerity phones Dove from Kate's house. Dove rushes round to find his dog killed, and sends Kate and Lizzy into hiding on Cape Cod. He reveals the bomber's identity to his colleagues, but lies about how he knows. A bomb is planted in the stereo headphones of Anthony Franklin, Dove's bumptious replacement in the squad, but Dove manages to defuse it. Gaerity sends the squad a message hinting at Dove's secret, and Franklin begins to suspect.

Dove and Franklin are tracking Gaerity to his hideout on a derelict freighter, when Dove's uncle Max calls him from a pub, having used his Irish republican contacts to track down Gaerity. But Gaerity captures Max and wires him up to an explosive mechanism, which Max detonates himself, rather than have Dove risk his life trying to save him. Gaerity hunts down Dove's family to Cape Cod and plants a bomb in their jeep. Kate returns to find Dove in despair, and spurs him into action. He returns to Gaerity's hideout and struggles with him for control of the bomb in Kate's jeep, while she plays in an Independence Day concert. Franklin arrives in time to save Dove, and Gaerity is killed as the ship blows up. Dove rushes back to save Kate and Lizzy, and disarms the bomb in the speeding car. Franklin promises not to reveal the truth about his past if he will allow him to take the credit for foiling Gaerity.



Boom town rat: Tommy Lee Jones

The summer of 1994 will live long in the memory of all fans of the distinctive "the red wire... no, the blue wire" thrill of the Big Bomb movie. With the Keanu Reeves vehicle *Speed* revving up in the wings, this superficially very similar but actually very different film will whet the appetites of pyromaniacs and stress-fiends alike, as well as confounding anyone who ever doubted that international terrorism can be fun.

Blown Away is a bizarre mixture of laughabie American-Irishisms, ham-fisted direction, bad clothes and unrepentant sadism, which after a dull start eventually becomes compulsively entertaining. The three-minute Bomb-Imminent tension-building period about a third of the way through, in which the camera sets up camp inside a succession of domestic appliances in order to mislead us that one of them contains a bomb, is one of the best of its kind in screen history.

Up to that point, the whole thing is rather disappointing. The totally excessive opening prison escape scene (does Northern Ireland's prison population really live in a cute big old castle?) sets an overwrought tone which the story and the dialogue take a while to live up to. Jeff Bridges' good guy – basically Mel Gibson in *Lethal Weapon* with a side order of Catholic guilt – is chronically underwritten, and Tommy Lee Jones as a demonic terorist takes a while to warm to the job in hand ("I've come here to create a new country called chaos and a new government called anarchy"). But when he warms, he really warms. Not as natural as, say, Dennis Hopper might have been, Jones nonetheless attains two or three moments of true greatness here: not least a virtuoso drunken bomb-making scene to the sound of U2's 'I Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For'.

Among the supporting cast, a terrible 'top-o'-the-morning' turn by Jeff's dad Lloyd is out-faced by some great work from the perennially undervalued Forest Whitaker. Two scenes contend, however, for the film's real high point: the moment in Boston's genuine Irish bar where an order for Guinness is met with what look like two glasses of Safeways Beaujolais, and the following exchange between Jeff Bridges and his long-suffering wife – "Was it... the IRA?" – "No, he was too crazy for that."

Ben Thompson

De eso no se habla (We Don't Want to Talk About It)

Argentina/Italy 1993

Director: María Luisa Bemberg

Certificate
PG
Distributor
Artificial Eye
Production Companies
Oscar Kramer (Argentina)/
Aura Films S.R.L. (Italy)
Producer
Oscar Kramer
Co-producers
Roberto Cicutto
Vincenzo De Leo
Production Co-ordinator
Maria Lagarde
Production Manager
Raul Outeda
Unit Manager
Carlos Latreyte
Post-production Supervisor
Raul Outeda
Assistant Directors
Alejandro Maci
Diego Flesca
Sebastian Puenzo
Mercedes G. Guevara
Screenplay
María Luisa Bemberg
Jorge Goldenberg
Based on a short story by Julio Llinás
Dialogue
Jorge Goldenberg
Script Supervisor
Aldo Romero
Director of Photography
Felix Monti
Camera Operators
Andres Masson
Ricardo Cosenza
Editor
Juan Carlos Macías
Art Director
Jorge Sarudiansky
Art Co-ordinator
José Luis Almada
Special Effects
Tom Cumdom
Costume Design
Graciela Galán
Make-up
Jorge Bruno
Hairstylists
Mirella Ginotto
María Isabel Nanotti
Music/Music Director
Nicola Piovani
Sound
Carlos Abbate

Cast
Marcello Mastroianni
Ludovico D'Andrea
Luisina Brando
Leonor
Alejandra Podestá
Charlotte
Betiana Blum
Madama
Roberto Carnaghi
Padre Aurelio
Alberto Segado
Dr Blanes
Jorge Luz
Alcalde
Mónica Villa
Sra Zamildio
Juan Manuel Tenuta
Police Chief
Tina Serrano
Widow Schmidt
Verónica Llinás
Myrna
Susana Cortinez
Sra Peralta
Marín Kalwill
Mayor's Clerk
Mónica Lacoste
Sra Blanes
Walter Marin
Mojame
María Cecilia Miserere
Romilda
Hernán Muñoa
Celestino
Jorge Ochoa
Sr Peralta
Jean Pierre Reguerraz
Monsieur Roussineau
Fito Paez
Musician
Jorge Baza de Candia
Sr Zamudio
Nene Real
Celina
Guillermo Marín
Sarrasani
Marta Lopez Lecube
Gladys
Micaela Rosa
Charlotte as a Child
Miguel Serebrenik
Mojame as a Child

9,417 feet
105 minutes

In colour
Subtitles

In a small town, Leonor, a widow, runs a store and looks after her young daughter Charlotte. She employs Mojame, a young orphan. On Charlotte's second birthday, Leonor comes to terms with the fact that her daughter's growth will be restricted. Consequently she obliterates every reference to 'dwarfs' and small people, even burning fairy tales. Meanwhile Charlotte grows up to be an elegant and intelligent young woman. The arrival in town of the mysterious Ludovico D'Andrea arouses Leonor's interest. He becomes a regular guest both at Leonor's tea parties and at the local brothel. Plans are made for a fund-raising concert and Leonor suggests that Charlotte give a piano recital. Later she asks D'Andrea to find a horse for her daughter and is upset when he turns up with a Shetland pony. He returns with a horse and is mesmerized by the sight of Charlotte riding it.

Visiting the brothel that night, D'Andrea gets into an argument with the local doctor. They duel, and D'Andrea is injured. He goes away for a few months to recuperate, and on returning invites Leonor out. She believes that he will propose to her; but he asks to marry her daughter. Though shocked, Leonor agrees; D'Andrea proposes to Charlotte and she accepts.

The wedding goes ahead, although the mayor dies in the middle of the ceremony. Later, D'Andrea is made mayor and enjoys married life with Charlotte. One night, however, the circus comes to town. Leonor is horrified and begs D'Andrea to ban it. He refuses, but concedes to her demand that Charlotte should not be allowed to go. That night a storm brews. D'Andrea releases Charlotte's horse from the stable. Later, Charlotte steals away and visits the circus. The following day the circus leaves town with Charlotte joining them. Devastated, Leonor shuts herself away, while D'Andrea disappears. Some believe that he drowned, while there are stories of him being seen prowling around the circuses in Hamburg.

For her sixth feature, Argentinian director Maria Luisa Bemberg has turned away from the concerns with her country, its history and the place of women within it that have marked her previous films. In *We Don't Want to Talk About It*, there is no particular sense of time or place. The costumes and cars are of the 30s, but such period details do not seem to carry any great weight. They may be there to allude to a particularly classic and decorative moment in cinema history, or to the time of Bemberg's own childhood. Meanwhile the small, isolated port town in which the story is set could be on the out-reaches of Never-Never Land. It's an appropriate setting for a tragi-comic fable which gently lampoons Leonor's *petit bourgeois* values but more significantly touches on the universal and timeless theme of parent-child relationships.

Leonor may burn such books as *Tom Thumb*, *Gulliver's Travels* and *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, but Bemberg creates an uneasy fairy tale of her own. Leonor and Charlotte are the focus of the narrative, but their predicament is fleetingly echoed in the relationship between one of Leonor's friends and her deaf and dumb daughter, and also between the decrepit Mayor and the son who has to translate his father's mumblings. The other child that is important to the story is Mojame, the young lad whom Leonor employs to work at her store. An orphan cut off from his background, he has no parents to cast a protective shadow over his life. One character suggests that he might be of Arabic descent, that an all-revealing 'd' has been lopped off from the end of his name. Indeed, the end of the film seems to confirm this, when the story's occasional narrator announces his name as Mohammed Ben Ali. One can only presume that Mojame has finally made claim to his origins, accepted who he is. In this respect, Bemberg treats the familial ties with a certain ambiguity. For Mojame, his absent family becomes his fortunate destiny.

Of course, Mojame is also 'different' from the community around him, and the notion of accepting one's difference is at the heart of the film. Charlotte's physical 'deviation' is that which is not talked about as Leonor represses the truth. On one level the story provides a critique of a 'politically correct' desire to banish certain images rather than open them up for understanding. Certainly the book-burning scene has a particularly eerie resonance – signifying the triumph of the literal over a symbolic and more imaginative interpretation of myths and fairy-tales. Certainly Bemberg would like the audience to embrace the romantic sensibility. The dashing D'Andrea (Marcello Mastroianni continues to work his particular charm) is an unreliable fabulist who accepts Charlotte for what she is. Yet, once wedded to her, he becomes subsumed to convention; their married live is lifeless. As Charlotte runs away with the glittering circus, fantasy appears to triumph, as the repressed returns with a vengeance. Meanwhile Leonor is left bereft in a cold, dark cell – punishment meted out to the mother who attempts to exercise some influence over her child even in her adult years.

In this respect, Charlotte's diminutive size takes on a symbolic meaning within the film. Leonor would prefer her daughter to be her little girl for the rest of her life. In one scene Leonor spies the adolescent Charlotte dressed up as Carmen and admiring herself in front of the mirror. It is a sight that patently disturbs the mother, who goes to her room and starts screaming. But Leonor's fears that her daughter will usurp her place are confirmed when D'Andrea confesses to her his love for Charlotte. It is a wryly observed moment as Leonor and D'Andrea talk at cross purposes, with her believing he is about to propose to her. The fact that Bemberg also wants the audience to believe that this is about to be the case suggests that Leonor is a figure for whom one should have a degree of sympathy rather than mocking. If her attempts to remove every reference to dwarfs and midgets seem a little extreme – she steals into a neighbour's garden at midnight to knock down some gnomes, and later removes the marzipan bridal figures from the wedding cake and munches them in one gulp – she believes that she has the best intentions. Luisina Brando portrays Leonor as a woman with a great many foibles, but at least with some heart. As she walls herself at the end of the tale, looking as grey as her stone house, there is a sense of great pity for the spellbound woman who could not let the magic of change into her life.

Lizzie Francke

The Hudsucker Proxy

USA 1994

Director: Joel Coen

Certificate
PG
Distributor
Rank
Production Company
PolyGram Filmed Entertainment/
Warner Bros present
A Silver Pictures production
In association with
Working Title Films
Executive Producers
Tim Bevan
Eric Fellner
Producer
Ethan Coen
Co-producer
Graham Place
Production Associate
Mary Weisgerber
Production Co-ordinators
Holly Gent Palmo
2nd Unit:
Christy N. Gilmer
Production Managers
Alma Kuttruff
2nd Unit:
Gilly Ruben
Chicago Unit Manager
Terri Clemens
Location Co-ordinators
Heidi Mehltretter
Chicago:
Kim Miller
2nd Unit Director
Sam Raimi
Assistant Directors
Victor Malone
Sarah Addington
Vincent Palmo Jnr
Casting
Donna Isaacson
John Lyons
North Carolina:
Sandra D. Dawes
Screenplay
Ethan Coen
Joel Coen
Sam Raimi
Dialogue Supervisor
Philip Stocton
Script Supervisor
Thomas Johnston
Director of Photography
Roger Deakins
2nd Unit Director of Photography
Paul Elliott
Unit/Special Photography
Jim Bridges
Visual Effects Photography
Patrick Turner
Blue Screen Unit:
Kim Foster Marks
Steadicam Operator
Frederick Raphael
Visual Effects
Producer/Supervisor:
Michael J. McAlister
Editor:
Luis Colina
Co-producer:
Kat Dillon
Co-ordinator:
Chris Watts
Graphic Design
Eric Rosenberg
Motion Control Supervisor
Martin Rosenberg
Blue Screen Unit
Manager:
Edward T. Hirsch
Production
Co-ordinator:
Louis F. DiFelice
Digital Compositing
The Computer Film Company
Matte Paintings
Mark Sullivan
Rich Cohen
Digital Matte Images
Industrial Light & Magic
Editor
Thom Noble
Production Designer
Dennis Gassner
Art Director
Leslie McDonald
Set Design
Tony Fanning
Gina Cranham
Richard Yanez
Set Decorators
Nancy Haigh
Set Dressers
Paige Augustine
Claire Gaul
Tinker Linville
Linda Cathey
Kip Bartlett
Matthew Sullivan
Storyboard Artist
Todd Anderson
Minature Effects
Stetson Visual Services
Mark Stetson
Robert Spurlock
Production
Co-ordinator:
Gail Oda
Chief Modelmaker
Ian Hunter
Model Design
Chris Gorak
Lead Model Electronics
Erik Stohl
Lead Model Mechanics
Roy Goode
Mechanical Effects
Peter M. Chesney
2nd Unit:
Design FX Company
Costume Design
Richard Hornung
Costume Supervisor
Ellen Ryba
Make-up
Jean A. Black
Lydia Milars
Monty Weastmore
Hairstylists
Cydney Cornell
Melissa Yonkey
Title Design
Balsmeyer & Everett
Computer Graphics:
Syzygy Digital Cinema
Music
Carter Burwell
Music Themes
Aran Khachaturian
Orchestrations
Sonny Kompanek
Music Editor/Adaptations
Todd Kasow
Songs/Music Extracts
"Memories Are Made of These" by Terry Gilkyson, Richard Dehr, Frank Miller, performed by Peter Gallagher; "In a Sentimental Mood" by Duke Ellington; "Flying Home" by Benny Goodman, Lionel Hampton; "Carmen" by Georges Bizet, performed by Grace Bumbry
Choreography
Wesley Fata
Supervising Sound Editor
Skip Lievsay
Dialogue Editor
Bob Hein
Foley Supervisor
Bruce Pross
ADR Editor
Gail Stocton
Foley Editors
Frank Kern
Eliza Paley
Steve Visscher
Production Sound Mixer
Allan Byer

Sound Recordists
Jean Marie Carroll
Chicago:
Dan Richter
Dolby stereo
consultant:
Bradford L. Hohle
Sound Re-recordists
Michael Barry
Lee Dichter
Sound Effects Editor
Eugene Gearty
Foley Artist
Marko Costanzo
Stunt Co-ordinator
Jerry Hewitt

Cast
Tim Robbins
Norville Barnes
Paul Newman
Sidney J. Mussburger
Jennifer Jason Leigh
Amy Archer
Charles Durning
Waring Hudsucker
Jim True
Buzz
John Mahoney
Chief
William Cobbs
Moses
Bruce Campbell
Smitty
Harry Bugin
Aloysius
John Seitz
Benny
Joe Grifasi
Lou
Roy Brocksmith
I. M. Hobson
John Scanlan
Jerome Dempsey
John Wylie
Gary Allen
Richard Woods
Peter MacPherson
Board Members
David Byrd
Dr Hugo
Bromfenbrenner
Christopher Darga
Mail Room Orienter
Pat Cranshaw
Ancient Sorter
Robert Weil
Mail Room Boss
Mary Lou Rosato
Mussburger's Secretary
Ernie Sarracino
Luigi
Eleanor Glockner
Mrs Mussburger
Kathleen Perkins
Mrs Braithwaite
Joseph Marcus
Sears Braithwaite
of Bullard
Peter Gallagher
Vic Tenneta
Noble Willingham
Zebulon Cardoza
Barbara Ann Grimes
Mrs Cardoza
Thom Noble
Thorstenson
Finlandson
Steve Buscemi
Beatnik Barman
William Duff-Griffin
Newsreel Scientist
Anna Nicole
Za-Za
Pamela Everett
Dream Dancer
Arthur Bridges
Hula-hoop Kid
Sam Raimi
John Cameron
Hudsucker
Brainstormers
Skipper Dune
Mr Grier
Jay Kapner
Mr Levin
Jon Polito
Mr Bumstead
Richard Whiting
Ancient Puzzler
Linda McCoy
Coffee Shop Waitress
Stan Adams
Emcee
Karl Mundt
Newsreel Announcer
Joanne Pankow
Newsreel Secretary
Mario Todisco
Norville's Goon
Colin Fickes
Newsboy
Dick Sasso
Drunk in Alley
Jesse Brewer
Stan Lichtenstein
Ace O'Connell
Frank Jeffries
Phil Loch
Todd Alcott
Richard Schiff
Michael Earl Reid
Lou Criscuolo
Mailroom Screamers
Mike Starr
Willie Reale
Harvey Meyer
Dave Hager
David Fawcett
Tom Toner
Jeff Still
Gil Pearson
David Massie
Peter Siragusa
Michael Houlihan
David Gould
Marc Garber
Mark Miller
Nelson George
Ed Lilliard
Newsroom Reporters
Wentland Sandel
James Dueter
Rick Peeples
Cynthia Baker
New Year's Mob

9,962 feet
111 minutes

Dolby stereo
In colour

New York, New Year's Eve, 1958-9. Norville Barnes, Chairman of Hudsucker Industries, climbs out on a ledge at the top of the Hudsucker Building, contemplating suicide. A month earlier, Norville arrives in the city from Muncie, Indiana, and gets a job in the Hudsucker mail room on the day company founder Waring Hudsucker jumps to his death. Sidney J. Mussburger, Hudsucker's aide, reasons that if an idiot is appointed to the chairmanship, the stock will plunge to a point when the board can buy it up and gain control. Norville is entrusted with a last letter from Hudsucker to Mussburger but so flounders in his attempt at delivery that Mussburger makes him Chairman.

Amy Archer, a cynical journalist,



Sweet and screwball: Tim Robbins

poses as Norville's secretary to research an exposé of his appointment. When Mussburger approves Norville's stupidest idea, the company unexpectedly makes a killing by marketing the hula hoop and begins to trade extraordinarily high. Success goes to Norville's head and he becomes self-satisfied and corrupt just as the hard-boiled Amy is on the point of warming to him. Mussburger leaks to the press that Norville, depressed now he has found out Amy has been fooling him, is on the point of going insane. On New Year's Eve, Norville evades the men from the asylum and climbs out on the ledge. He falls but Moses, the Hudsucker Building's mysteriously beneficent clockkeeper, halts time by jamming the giant clock. Suspended in mid-air, Norville is visited by an angelic Waring Hudsucker, who reminds him of the undelivered letter; it decrees his personal stock be deeded to whoever becomes Chairman. Moses struggles with Aloysius, his evil opposite number, and time starts again, but Norville makes it safely to the ground. Mussburger is committed, Norville and Amy are engaged and Norville announces his new stupid idea, the frisbee.

In style, this expensive item recalls the other broad comedy collaboration between the Coen Brothers and Sam Raimi, Raimi's compromised living cartoon *Crimewave*. Here again is a fantasy world stranded between a real and an imagined past, populated by slightly caricatured stereotypes, where innocence is constantly threatened by irrational, violent evil. There are obvious elements from classic Hollywood, with touches of *Meet John Doe*, *Mr Deeds Goes to Town* and *It's a Wonderful Life*, although the setting of 50s big business is subtly different from the Depression or World War One arenas favoured by Frank Capra. Given Raimi's debt to EC horror comics, it would seem that the touchstone here, for subject matter as well as approach, is EC's other great achievement, *MAD* magazine. The hard-boiled newsroom and the ominously oppressive boardroom are less like the originals of *His Girl Friday* or *Executive Suite* than like the sort of movie satires *MAD* published in its heyday. Even the lampooning of fads like beatniks, the hula hoop and the Organisation Man harks back not only to the jokes of *MAD* but to its late 50s targets.

The strand of the demonic which threads through the Coen oeuvre recurs here, with a literal battle of devils and angels in the background. Harry Bugin's barely-glimpsed but unsettling character Aloysius (the little man who chips names off the office doors of the departed) succeeds the literally hellborn demons played by Randall 'Tex' Cobb, John Turturro and John Goodman in *Raising Arizona*, *Miller's Crossing* and *Barton Fink*. But here, the upfront villainy of a nattily-suited Paul Newman is more in line with the comical fiends of Raimi's pictures than with the subtler, more rounded grotesques played by Jon Polito or Michael Lerner in those last two films. In the character of Moses, there is an angelic answer to these rampant demons. His beneficence provides a literal *deus ex machina* for the breathtaking time-stop finale, and allows Charles Durning to appear as a ludicrous but touching pantomime angel drifting down through swirling snow as he strums a ukelele.

If this is somehow not a pinnacle masterpiece to equal the all-round perfection of the last two Coen films, perhaps it is because the actual story (written shortly after *Blood Simple*) is too deeply indebted to its movie precursors to form its own identity. *Blood Simple* and *Miller's Crossing* might have grown from the seeds of Dashiell Hammett, but they have an obsessive, perfectly-plotted identity of their own. *The Hudsucker Proxy*, which has some of Raimi's knockabout looseness and even a few plodding stretches, is essentially a simple Faust tale, while the earlier films were complex examinations of the Devil's Bargain. Tim Robbins manages the change from sweetness to superficiality with expert ease but always seems to strain to evoke Jimmy Stewart or Gary Cooper. Jennifer Jason Leigh, meanwhile, goes against the odds by taking bits from Jean Arthur, Barbara Stanwyck, Katharine Hepburn and Rosalind Russell and scrambling them into a genuine, original performance (it's not often noted, but Joel Coen is an extraordinarily sensitive director of interesting actresses).

While the earlier Coen films went beyond pastiche, this wholly delightful urban parable is content simply to juggle much-loved elements and present them with a cinematic verve that easily equals the originals. Few filmmakers today are capable of moments as perfect as the little hitch-and-smile Durning makes before beginning his running jump along the boardroom table and through the window. And the superbly orchestrated sequence (all credit to composer Carter Burwell and editor Thom Noble) which follows the initial failure and snowballing success of the hula hoop is a set piece to rank beside the 'Danny Boy' shoot-out from *Miller's Crossing*, with the added advantage of charm. Though they have never made a commercial crossover hit (and this seems an unlikely prospect), the Coens are the most exciting, imaginative and confident movie-makers in America.

Kim Newman

Le Jeune Werther

France 1992

Director: Jacques Doillon

Certificate
15
Distributor
Gala Films
Production Companies
Les Films Alain Sarde/
Home Made Movies
With the participation
of Canal +
Executive Producers
Christine Gozlan
J.F.P.M & Associates
Assistant Director
Hervé Duhamel
Casting
Marie de Laubier
Eve Guillou
Rafi Pitts
Bertrand Figuier
Screenplay
Jacques Doillon
Director of Photography
Christophe Pollock
Editor
Nicole Lubtchansky
Music
Philippe Sarde
after "Werther"
by Jules Massenet
Music Performed by
Concertina:
John Nixon
Violincello:
Keith Harvey
Saxophone Soprano:
Stan Sulzmann
Accordion:
Gilbert Roussel
Songs/Music Extracts
"J'écume" by Alain
Bashung, J. Fauque,
performed by Alain
Bashung; "La France"
by Chetfi, Zebda,
performed by Zebda;
"Shadder" by Rumour,
performed by The
Cruel Sea; "Yalil"
by A. Annabi,
M. Meissonnier,
performed by Amina
Sound
Jean-Claude Laureux
Dominique Hennequin
Dubbing
Jacques Lévy
Dubbing Recordist
Fabien Adelin
Sound Effects
Pascal Chauvin
Sound Effects Recordist
Joël Rangon
Music Recordist
John Timperley

Cast
Ismaël Jolé-Ménébhi
Ismaël
Thomas Brémond
Théo
Simon Clavière
Simon
Pierre Mézerette
Pierre
Faye Anastasia
Faye
Miren Capello
Miren
Sunny Lebrati
Sunny
Mirabelle Rousseau
Mirabelle
Jessica Tharaud
Jessica
Pierre Encrevé
Headmaster
Margot Abascal
Guillaume's Sister
Hervé Duhamel
French Teacher
Marie de Laubier
Maths Teacher
Eve Guillou
History Teacher
Bertrand Figuier
Photographer
Julie Nesic
Young Girl at Church
Evelyne Nesic
Yannick La Bruyère
Miren's Parents
Philippe Chanoine
Physics Teacher
Alexandre Boutry
Guillaume's Friend

8,484 feet
94 minutes
In colour

Subtitles

A lycée in contemporary central Paris. Ismaël and his group of close friends, all aged about 14, are deeply upset by the news that Guillaume, one of their friends, has committed suicide. Feelings of bafflement and guilt mix with curiosity, and the group decides to investigate the reasons for the suicide, especially since they are given no satisfactory explanation by teachers or parents. Some believe that Guillaume was distraught at being suspended from school for four days by a physics teacher. To make the teacher feel guilty and frighten him, they write accusatory graffiti on the front of the lycée, and ambush the man in his block of flats, spraying tear gas in his face.

But foremost is the discovery that Guillaume had been in love with a mysterious blonde young woman, Miren, whom they track down. In the process, Ismaël increasingly identifies with the dead Guillaume and gradually falls in love with Miren, staking her out in the same way Guillaume had. The rather morbid identification process is heightened when Ismaël is

given a copy of Goethe's *Werther*, which he then reads obsessively (he later gives a copy to Miren). The impact of Guillaume's death, Goethe's novel and the fascination for Miren disrupt Ismaël's and his friends' lives, their friendships and love affairs. Ismaël's relationship with his friend Théo suffers, as well as that of Théo and the spunky Mirabelle, culminating at the party given by Faye, to which Ismaël has invited Miren. He is overjoyed at her acceptance, but the party turns sour as he finds that his love for her is totally unrequited, as Guillaume's had been, and that she is flirting with Théo. To his worried friends who fear a copycat suicide, Ismaël promises he has no intention of killing himself. However, he continues to follow Miren from a distance, as Guillaume had done before.

Jacques Doillon's work is so little known in the UK that the release of one of his films is to be celebrated, though the absence of context will make this rather austere film more difficult to understand. Since the early 70s, Doillon has occupied a marginal, yet not negligible place in French *auteur* cinema. His intimist and usually low-budget films are marked, in classic fashion, by recurrent personal themes of oedipal conflicts and painful relationships (*Le Jeune Werther* is loosely based on an incident in Doillon's own youth). His *mise en scène* favours pared-down, almost claustrophobic, settings and situations, and he is an outstanding director of actors.

Le Jeune Werther, thanks to its graceful young cast, is a more immediately charming film than some of Doillon's previous ones. It even looks, at first sight, like one of many French adolescent films – Truffaut's *L'Argent de poche*, Diane Kurys' *Diabolo Menthe*, Claude Miller's *L'Effrontée*, or Varda's *Kung-Fu Master*. The kids wear trainers and baggy T-shirts and like rock music; they joke about their parents being separated and complain that their teachers are 'jerks'.

But beyond these generic markers, Doillon's project is other than providing amusing scenes of misdemeanour or confrontations between generations. For a start, parents and teachers are practically absent throughout. And, as a reference to Goethe's *Werther* makes clear, the mood is one of melancholy and anguish, rather than affectionate nostalgia. In tight framings, the film relentlessly observes Ismaël and his group of close friends, dissecting their feelings. Though shot in real classrooms and Parisian streets, *Le Jeune Werther* is a theatrical tour de force. Its remarkable performances (by non-professionals) consistently hit the right register: attractive but not winsome, naturalistic and yet cerebral. The tension between naturalism and artifice is also carried by the dialogue which articulates, in recognisable Parisian youth parlance, sophisticated thoughts and emotions rarely voiced on screen by people of that age. In a dramatically economical form, *Le Jeune Werther* explores – like the type of novel it alludes to – complicated layers of adolescent desire and identity formation.

The deliberate refusal to step outside the small group is the film's strength but also its weakness. We long to see the kids at home, as Doillon tantalisingly gives us tiny glimpses of parents. Paradoxically, in view of the refusal of naturalism, the choice of milieu, sparingly but meticulously indicated, is crucial. We are among the well-off intellectual bourgeoisie of the Left Bank. Predominantly white – though Ismaël is not, he clearly shares the milieu's culture and values – and extremely articulate, the film's adolescents possess the 'cultural capital' necessary for them to debate their subtlest emotions and relate to classical literature. This choice of milieu is as legitimate as any other (and makes the conversations plausible, if occasionally precious), but it also induces a sense of detachment, because the adolescents' problems remain entirely in the realm of emotions. If Doillon avoids the prettiness of Truffaut or Kurys in his depiction of adolescence, he also lacks the vigour of Pialat who, in films such as *Passe ton bac d'abord* or *A nos amours*, embedded his young characters' emotional turmoil in more pressing social structures. This does not make the emotions in Pialat's films necessarily more authentic, but it gives them a sense of urgency which *Le Jeune Werther*, despite the seriousness of its purpose, lacks.

Ginette Vincendeau



Salut les copains: Ismaël Jolé-Ménébhi, Mirabelle Rousseau, Thomas Brémond

Lightning Jack

Australia 1994

Director: Simon Wincer

Certificate
PG
Distributor
Buena Vista
Production Companies
Lightning Ridge/Village Roadshow production
Executive Producers
Paul Hogan
Graham Burke
Anthony Stewart
Producers
Greg Coote
Simon Wincer
Line Producer
Grant Hill
Production Co-ordinators
Carrie Durose
Australia:
Serena Gattuso
Production Manager
Vicki Popplewell
Unit Production Manager
Grant Hill
Location Manager
Brian Haynes
Post-production Supervisors
Mark Marshall
Sylvia Walker Wilson
2nd Unit Director
Bill Burton
Casting
Mike Fenton
Julie Ashton
Associate:
Rachel Davies
ADR Voice:
Barbara Harris
Assistant Directors
Bob Donaldson
Mark Cotone
Lisa C. Satriano
Laura Nisbet
Australia:
Debbie Atkins
Simon Warnok
Screenplay
Paul Hogan
Script Supervisor
Liz Barton
Director of Photography
David Eggby
Camera/Steadicam Operators
Buzz Feitshans
David Luckenbach
Opticals
Roger Cowland
Editor
O. Nicholas Brown
Art Departemtn Co-ordinator
Mark Meloccaro
Production Designer
Bernard Hines
Art Directors
Lisette Thomas
Australia:
Virginia Bieneman
Set Design
Andrew Gartner
Kelley Graham
Set Decorators
Lynn Wolverton Parker
Australia:
Susan Maybury
Set Dressers
Robert Alcala
Wren Boney
Dan Miller
Leonard Vigil
Andrew Trujillo
Frederic Lopez
Edie Douglass
Siri Singh
John Kretschmer
Australia:
Margie Rahmann
Scenic Artist
Ray Pedler
Special Effects Supervisor
Greg Curtis
Special Effects
Logan Frazee
Dan Lester
Costume Design
Bruce Finlayson
Wardrobe Supervisors
Charlene Amateau
Australia:
Michael Davis
Make-up Artists
Judy Lovell
Bonita DeHaven
Australia:
Margaret Stevenson
Hairstylists
Susan Mills
Australia:
Sash Lamey
Title Design
Optical & Graphic
Music/Music Conductor
Bruce Rowland
Orchestrations
Bruce Rowland
Narida Tyson-Chew
Music Editor
Roy Prendergast
Music Consultant
Joel Sill
Sound Design/Supervising Sound Editor
Tim Chau
Sound Editors
Peter Burgess
Frank Lipson
Glenn Newham
Gavin Myers
Dialogue:
Livia Ruzic
ADR Editor
Glenn Martin
Production Sound Mixers
Bud Alper
Australia:
Lloyd Carrick
Music Mixer
Robin Grey
Sound Re-recording Mixers
Peter Fenton
Phil Heywood
Ron Purvis
Stunt Co-ordinators
Bill Burton
Australia:
Guy Norris
Armourer
Brian Burns

Cast
Paul Hogan
Lightning Jack Kane
Cuba Gooding Jnr
Ben Doyle
Beverly D'Angelo
Lana
Kamala Dawson
Pilar
Pat Hingle
Marshall Kurtz
Richard Riehle
Reporter
Frank McRae
Mr Doyle
Roger Daltry
John T. Coles
L. Q. Jones
Local Sheriff
Max Cullen
Bart
Sandy Ward
Mr Curren
Roy Brocksmith
Junction City Tailor
Douglas Stewart
Junction City Shopkeeper
Kevin O'Morrison
Old Man in Alley
Mark Miles
Luke
Clif Stokes
Bully Cowboy
Bob Sorenson
Clem
Ramond O'Connor
Pat
Robert Guajardo
Bank Manager
Tom Noga
Bank Clerk
Ed Adams
Cole Younger
Bruce Miles
Man
Grace Keagy
Mrs Franks
Jess Franks
Auctioneer
Kenny Jacobs
South Fork Bank Teller
Ben Cooper
Shopkeeper in Bank
Sandy Gibbons
South Fork Sheriff
Larry Sellers
Comanche Leader
Patrick Augure
Young Comanche
Michael C. Wells
Man in Wayside Flats Saloon
Ben Zeller
Old Timer
Paul Blott
Steve Schwartz Hartley
Deputies
Gus Mercurio
Tough Guy
Mark Coffey
Etienne Fourie
Saloon Cowboys

10,253 feet
114 minutes

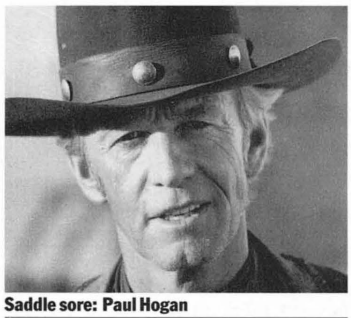
Dolby stereo
In colour
Anamorphic

1870. Lightning Jack Kane is the only member of the Younger Brothers gang to escape a botched bank robbery they attempt to pull off in Junction City. When he reads the newspaper report of the robbery and the gang's capture, he is disappointed to note the decline in his reputation. He stages another robbery and during the getaway takes hostage a mute boy, Ben Doyle, who, although initially terrified, is glad to escape the patronising attitude of the customers in the general store in which he works. Doyle soon proves his worth by helping Jack elude a posse of pursuing riders. To impress his young partner, Lightning Jack allows him to read his press cuttings, and Doyle is delighted to learn Jack is a genuine outlaw.

Fleeing another bungled robbery, Lightning Jack and Doyle find themselves under observation by a large group of Comanches. They escape after an extended chase through mountainous terrain and a network of caves. After instructing the innocent Doyle in sexual techniques, Jack takes his young sidekick to the saloon where his old flame Lana is still nursing hopes of Jack fulfilling his promise to her to take her away. After a night with her, Jack extricates Doyle from an incipient conflict with a gunman in the bar. Meanwhile, Marshall Kurtz of Junction City has hired a number of bounty hunters to track him down and kill him. When Lana learns of their arrival in town, she warns Jack and Doyle. Disappointed at the slim bounty on offer, Jack decides to pull off another job where it will be least expected, back at Junction City. Before he can put this plan into effect, however, he is captured and imprisoned. Evading capture, Doyle manages to spring Jack from the sheriff's office.

Back in Junction City, Lightning Jack has noticed a rival gang's presence in the town. He alerts the town's vigilantes and watches them walk into the trap. As the town celebrate the gang's capture, he and Doyle rob the bank themselves before setting off in disguise to reward the faithfully waiting Lana. As Doyle, Lana and Jack set off, he reassures her that there are no Indians in the territory through which they are passing; two puffs of smoke then appear on the horizon.

The role of ageing outlaw whose reputation is on the slide proves uncomfortably close to Paul ▶



Saddle sore: Paul Hogan

◀ Hogan's own position as an actor who seems to have got whatever mileage there was from his *Crocodile Dundee* persona. That persona was, not accidentally, most at home within the knockabout but bland confines of Australian television commercials, perhaps in the end the most appropriate medium in which to both re-invent and send up a soft-centred version of post-imperial Australian masculinity. *Crocodile Dundee* played on notions of national identity. Here, a single reference apart, Hogan's character of Lightning Jack is entirely detached from those antipodean roots, but Hogan is not an actor of sufficient range to maintain credibility without them. He is not helped by the rambling script he wrote for the project (he is decidedly not a master of the witty one-liner) nor by Simon Wincer's lacklustre direction. The comic line between sending up incompetence and simply being incompetent needs a sharp eye for mood and a fine sense of timing to observe. There is little sense of either quality here. There are also signs of last-minute cuts which waste the presumably expensive use of a troupe of genuine Cheyenne riders and an elaborate set-up involving settlers, tents and a large herd of cattle.

If Hogan's own performance seems jaded, that of Cuba Gooding, from *Boyz N the Hood*, is never encouraged to develop beyond that of eye-rolling stereotype. The gags, mining a familiar homoerotic vein, stimulate embarrassment rather than laughter, most painfully in the scene in which Lightning Jack mimes the sex act by way of instructing Doyle. A presumably equally embarrassing scene involving a horse harness in the brothel appears to have been excised – the harness is brandished without explanation. While nothing can dim the splendour of the panoramic shots of Monument Valley, there seems slim reason for their inclusion. As is the case in so many Australian period productions, props are strewn about as if for a fashion shoot. If Paul Hogan, whose personal project this seems largely to have been, is genuinely keen on Western comedy, he could do worse than take a look at the Terence Hill/Bud Spencer 'Trinity' films, which, despite their unevenness, prove that broad comedy and cinematic boldness can go hand in hand. The most interesting thing about *Lightning Jack* remains the way it was funded, through floating the Lightning Jack Film Trust on the Australian Stock Exchange.

Verina Glaessner

Necronomicon

USA 1993

Directors: Christophe Gans/Shu Kaneko/Brian Yuzna

Certificate
18
Distributor
ITC
Production Company
Samuel Hadida presents
a Davis Film/Brian Yuzna production
In association with
Pioneer LDC
Ozla Pictures
Executive Producer
Taka Ichise
Producers
Samuel Hadida
Brian Yuzna
Co-producer
Aki Komine
Line Producer
Gary Schmoeller
Production Co-ordinator
Dawn Todd
Production Consultant
Shingo Miyauchi
Location Manager
Jeff Rubinstein
Post-production Supervisor
Andy Horvitch
2nd Unit Directors
Thomas C. Rainone
Brent V. Friedman
Taka Ichise
Assistant Directors
Ed Licht
Bill Barry
Patrick Kinney
Christy Santelli
Casting
Jeffery Passero
Screenplay
'The Library'/
'Whispers':
Brent V. Friedman
'The Drowned':
Christophe Gans
Brent V. Friedman
'The Cold':
Kazunori Ito
Brent V. Friedman
Story
'The Library'/
'Whispers':
Brian Yuzna
Brent V. Friedman
Script Supervisor
Jayne-Ann Tenggren
Directors of Photography
'The Cold'/'Whispers'/
'The Library':
Gerry Lively
'The Drowned':
Russell Brandt
Additional Photography
Tom Enriquez Milo
2nd Unit Director of Photography
Jerry Watson
Camera Operator
Russ Brandt
Steadicam Operator
Paul Taylor
Jeff Mart
Special Photography Effects
G. Bruno Stempel
Special Visual Effects
Dave Domeyer
Supervisor:
Lee Scott
Consultant:
Michael Muscal
'The Drowned':
Miniatures:
David B. Sharp Productions
Unit Director:
David B. Sharp
Co-ordinator:
Matthew Ullman
Digital/Optical Compositing
Perpetual Motion Pictures
Digital Supervisor:
Richard Malzahn
Optical Supervisor:
Robert Habros
Animation Effects
Bret Mixon
Supervising Editor
'The Cold'/'The Drowned':
Christopher Roth
Editor
'Whispers':
Keith Sauter
Production Designer
Anthony Tremblay
Visual Consultant
George Fromentin
Art Director
Aram Allen
Set Decorator
Claire Kaufman
Set Dressers
David Morgan
Jason Nunez
Scenic Artist
Shelly McKnight
Storyboard/Visual Concept
J.K. Potter
George Turner
John Rheaume
'The Drowned':
Thierry Segur
'Cold':
Joe Griffith
'Whispers':
Pete Von Sholly
Physical Effects
Bruno Stempel
Mechanical Effects
Doug Beswick
Costume Design
Ida Gearon
Make-up
Lisa Buono
Special Make-up Effects Supervisor
Thomas C. Rainone
Special Make-up Effects
'The Library':
H.P. Lovecraft:
John Vulich
Spraying Cthulhu:
Magic Media Industries
Supervisors:
John Buechler
John Foster
Alien Librarian:
Screaming Mad George Inc.
Supervisor:
Screaming Mad George
Chris Robbins
Wall Safe Creatures:
Steve Johnson's XFX Inc.
Supervisor:
Dave Barton
Christopher Nelson
'The Drowned':
Darkman and Resurrected Clara:
Optic Nerve Studios
Associate:
Tom Savini
Supervisor:
Everett Burrell
Creator:
John Vulich
Cthulhu and Clara/Tentacle Mutations:
Bart Mixon's Monster Fixin's
Supervisor:
Bart J. Mixon
Sculptor:
Ed Yang
'The Cold':
Make-up FX/
Dr. Madden:
Screaming Mad George Inc.
Madden's Meltdown:
Bart Mixon's Monster Fixin's
Chris Robbins-PRD
'Whispers':
Make-up/Mech/Stop Motion:
Todd Masters Co.
Creature Design/Animation:
Todd Masters
Supervisor:
Mark Maitre
Co-ordinator:
Candice Green
Optical FX supervisor:
David Gregory
Title House
Optical Composite:
Mark Corzine
Title House
Sculptor:
Greg Poluntanovich
Additional Make-up Effects
Rex FX
Spectral Effects Studios
Supervisor:
Todd Rex
Sam Greenmun
Hairstylist
Lisa Buono
Titles
Pacific
Title Design
Jay Johnson
Opticals
Hollywood Optical Systems
Supervisor:
David Hewitt
Music
Joseph LoDuca
Daniel Licht
Orchestrations
'The Library'/'The Drowned':
Joseph LoDuca
'The Cold'/'Whispers':
Daniel Licht
Music Editor
Douglas Lackey
Music Consultants
Carol Sue Baker
John Van Houten
Songs/Music Extracts
"Because the Dawn" by Daniel Licht, Amy Goldstein
Supervising Sound Editor
David Lewis Yewdall
Dwayne Avery
Sound Editors
Warren Smith
Thomas G. Burke
James Seltenreich
ADR Editor
Edward Hirsch
ADR Mixer
Ron Bedrosian
Additional:
Christina Tucker
Foley Mixer
Jackson Schwartz
Sound Mixers
Geoffrey Lucius Patterson
'The Cold':
Ken Ross
Supervising Re-recording Mixer
Jeffrey Perkins
Re-recording Mixer
Robert Thirlwell
Recordist
Larry Hoki
Music Mixer
'The Library'/
'The Drowned':
Jim Scheffler
Scoring Mixer
Larry Mah
Foley Artists
John Post
Lisa Houle
Post Sound Co-ordinator
Lisa Howes Yewdall
Stunt Co-ordinator
Gary Paul

Cast
'The Library':
Jeffrey Combs
H.P. Lovecraft
Tony Azito
Librarian
Juan Fernandez
Attendant
Brian Yuzna
Cabbie

'The Drowned':
Bruce Payne
Edward De La Poer
Richard Lynch
Jethro DeLaPore
Belinda Bauer
Nancy Gallmore
Maria Ford
Clara
Peter Jasienski
Jethro's Son
Denice D. Lewis
Emma DeLaPore
William Jess Russell
Doctor
Vladimir Kulich
Villager

'The Cold':
David Warner
Dr. Madden
Bess Meyer
Emily Osterman
Millie Perkins
Lena
Dennis Christopher
Dale Porkel
Gary Graham
Sam
Curt Lowens
Mr Hawkins
James Paradise
Sebastian White
Policemen

'Whispers':
Signy Coleman
Sarah
Obba Babatunde
Paul
Don Calfa
Mr Benedict
Judith Drake
Mrs Benedict

8,688 feet
97 minutes

Dolby stereo
In colour

At a gothic library, writer H.P. Lovecraft gains access to the forbidden book, the Necronomicon, from which he reads three stories. In 'The Drowned', Edward De La Poer, haunted by the death of his girlfriend Clara, inherits a hotel with a macabre history; a guilt-stricken Jethro DeLaPore threw himself from a balcony 60 years ago, two days after his wife Emma and son Jan drowned in a shipwreck from which Jethro escaped. Later, Edward reads in Jethro's sealed will how he burned the Bible in a rage, and was subsequently visited by a beast bearing a mystical book, the Necronomicon. Spilling his own blood to invoke the beast Cthulhu, Jethro revives the bodies of his wife and son, only to find them possessed of evil spirits. Jethro hides the book and throws himself to his death. Inspired, Edward recovers the book and recalls Clara from the depths, confessing that her death was the fault of his reckless driving. Cthulhu's tentacles burst from her body and the gigantic beast erupts from the hotel floor. Edward escapes, sending a chandelier to pierce Cthulhu's single eye.

In the library, two keepers bemoan Lovecraft's foolishness, as he begins to read 'The Cold'. Reporter Dale Porkel, investigating 11 mysterious deaths, questions Amy Osterman at a downtown tenement kept at freezing temperature to alleviate her rare skin disease. Amy recalls how, 22 years ago, her mother Emily came to Boston, renting a room from Lena in this building, owned by Dr. Madden, who occupied the forbidden third floor. When Emily's abusive stepfather Sam comes searching for her, Dr. Madden rescues Emily by stabbing Sam's hand and pushing him down the stairs. Traumatised, a sedated Emily sleeps, and dreams of Madden and Lena dismembering Sam. Next day, she learns from a diner proprietor that Madden must be at least 100 years old. Emily confronts Madden, who confesses to using Sam's body to feed his own; Madden has learned of a body-freezing technique which preserves life, but he still requires regular doses of fresh spinal fluid. Madden makes love to Emily while Lena watches jealously.

Later, Lena drives Emily from the house, but she returns, pregnant with Madden's child. Finding Madden and Lena struggling with the diner's proprietor, who came looking for Emily, Emily panics and a fire breaks out. Bereft of spinal fluid, Madden disintegrates and Lena shoots Emily, but attempts to save her when learning of her pregnancy. Back in the present, Porkel accuses Amy of being Emily. As he collapses from a drugged drink, Amy confesses that she is indeed Emily, still pregnant with a (preserved) unborn child; she did not survive the gunshot, but lives in death. Lena appears brandishing a syringe.

Back in the library, the curator closes in as Lovecraft reads 'Whispers'. Terrified that a liaison with her partner Paul has made her pregnant, Sarah, a policewoman, crashes their car. She recovers from unconsciousness to see Paul's body being dragged away, and follows a trail of blood into a basement. Here, a couple, Harold and Daisy, tell her of 'The Butcher', and show her to his underground tunnel. Sarah is thrown into a hellish pit by Daisy where, amid dismembered limbs, she finds Paul's zombiefied corpse; Sarah is swamped by birdlike predators. As she wakes in hospital, a doctor (resembling Harold) tells Sarah she has been unconscious following a car crash, while her mother (resembling Daisy) chides her for losing her baby. As Paul's corpse appears in the next bed, Mother/Daisy reveals that she has devoured the foetus, and aliens descend upon Sarah... Closing the Necronomicon, Lovecraft is attacked by

the supernatural assistant, while a beast struggles to recapture the book. Lovecraft repels his attacker who is devoured by the beast, and escapes to a waiting taxi, in which he grips the stolen book.

Although legendary sci-fi/horror maestro H.P. Lovecraft has had his name on an assortment of movies, none has adequately captured the eeriness of his writing. Lovecraft's short stories, like Edgar Allan Poe's, generally prioritise a sense of uncanniness over simple narrative cohesion, and the three Lovecraft stories which inspire this portmanteau ('The Rats in the Wall', 'Cool Air' and 'Whispers in the Darkness') offer little in the way of straightforward linear narrative. Instead, they spew out themes and ideas (guilt, loss of identity, life after death, the lure of the physical, the unbodily nature of the mind) in an incoherent torrent. The power of Lovecraft's writing is in its atmospheric stench; the problem for film-makers adapting Lovecraft lies in attempting to convey this 'smell' through a medium which relies heavily upon visual clarity and narrative concision. In the case of Poe, Roger Corman proved repeatedly that merely using the author's name was sufficient to satisfy audiences; his 'adaptations' merely recycle names and settings from the original stories. Lovecraft adaptations have tended to go the same way, using the author more as a form of product endorsement than as an artistic mentor.

For Brian Yuzna, the choice of a fragmented portmanteau based on Lovecraft hardly seems efficacious. Having scored his greatest artistic success with the superb allegorical horror of *Society* (which died at the box office), Yuzna must surely feel the desire to work again with a tightly constructed script in which a single story is ruthlessly told. Instead, in mounting this ambitious homage, Yuzna has opted to build upon material whose narrative foundations are shaky.

In its original inception, *Necronomicon* was described by Yuzna as an attempt to redress the balance of such enjoyably rubbery genre films as *Reanimator* and *From Beyond* (in both of which he was heavily involved) and present a more authentic screen rendering of Lovecraft. Yuzna and partner Samuel Hadida assembled an array of international directorial talent (Kaneko is Japanese, Gans is French), which in turn encouraged world-wide financial investment, ultimately raising funding approaching $5 million. As Brent V. Friedman was brought in to rewrite Lisa Morton's original script, the project continued to expand, and a veritable hall of fame of special effects technicians enlisted. Inevitably, in the transition from low-budget labour of love to (relatively) high-finance effects bonanza, Yuzna's original vision got lost. Fed and watered with increased resources, his pet celluloid beast cried out to be released from Yuzna's artistic shackles and allowed to roam free amid the mainstream of horror cinema. As Yuzna himself has said, "We realised it wasn't going to work, and we needed to just make a movie."



The big chill: David Warner

Thus, *Necronomicon* emerges not as a new Lovecraftian vision, but as a superior fantasy romp which devours, digests, and unrecognisably regurgitates Lovecraft. Yet for all its literary unfaithfulness, it succeeds on its own terms as an entertaining and imaginative portmanteau which juggles understated, atmospheric chills, extravagant cod philosophising, and full-blown rubbery effects with reckless abandon. Gans' opener 'The Drowned' is both the most visually impressive of the trilogy, and the most heavily influenced by Corman; an impressive directorial debut, it displays a surprisingly mature grasp of the technicalities of cinema. Kaneko's convoluted sandwich-filler 'The Cold' is less sure-footed, and extensive reshoots were reportedly required to lend overall coherence. Here, the delightfully *outré* special effects save the day as throbbing flesh melts and falls away from the living corpse of Doctor Madden. David Warner too helps pull things together with a splendidly ghoulish and straight-faced ice-monster performance, comically reminiscent of his mad scientist in *The Man With Two Brains*.

Yet for sheer special-effects mayhem, it is Yuzna's own meaty finale and encapsulating wrap-around which win first prize: severed limbs, hollowed heads, face-rippings and bodily mutations hold centre stage (often without much narrative sense or explanation), ensuring that the die-hard horror fans are more than satisfied. Having once described his approach to modern special effects as the creation of "plastic reality", in which surrealism triumphs over gore, Yuzna once again stretches the creative envelope through bizarre and imaginative design.

Despite the disparate visual styles, scriptwriter Friedman makes a valiant attempt to impose coherence by returning throughout to a core of central themes (motherhood, guilt, unrequited and lost love, the mind/body divide), and dropping in trademark humorous zingers (among the choice examples: "God's a goner, and he's putting his chips on another horse"). As for Yuzna, he can rest assured that, although Lovecraft may be turning in his grave, his own career, if not quite reborn, is resolutely undead.

Mark Kermode

L'Ombre du doute (A Shadow of Doubt)

France 1992

Director: Aline Issermann

Certificate
15
Distributor
Electric Pictures
Production Companies
CiBy 2000/TFI Films Production
With the participation of Cofimage 4/Investimage 4
Producer
CiBy 2000
Production Co-ordinator
Sylvie Balland
Production Manager
Patrick Lancelot
Location Managers
Franck Rouches
Sabine Delouvrier
Elsa Duhalde
Casting
Nathalie Cheron
Screenplay
Aline Issermann
Screenplay Collaboration
Martine Fadier-Nisse
Frédérique Gruyer
Adaptation/Dialogue
Aline Issermann
Continuity
Aruna Villiers
Director of Photography
Darius Khondji
Steadicam Operator
Marc Koninckx
Editor
Hervé Schneid
Production Designer
Cyr Boitard
Tapestry Maker
Alain Cibrario
Painting
Christine Khondji
Set Decorators
Perine Barré
Sebastian Birchler
Françoise Benoit-Fresco
Costume Design
Maritza Gligo
Make-up Supervisors
Kaatje Van Damme
Nathalie Tissier
Hair Supervisor
Thierry Marino
Music
Reno Isaac
Music Performed by
L'Ensemble Orchestral Harmonia Nova
Cello:
Hubert Varon
Songs
"Le Monde est Grand" by Reno Isaac, Aline Issermann, performed by Maitrise d'Antony

Sound
François de Morant
J.P. Roland-Lévy
François Groult
Dialogue Editor
Ailo Auguste
Dubbing
Jacques Lévy
Sound Effects
André Naudin
Sound Effects Recordist
Eric Bonnard

Cast
Mireille Perrier
Marie
Alain Bashung
Jean
Sandrine Blancke
Alexandrine
Emmanuelle Riva
Grandma
Michel Aumont
Grandpa
Luis Issermann
Pierre
Roland Bertin
Judge
Dominique Lavanant
Teacher
Thierry Lhermitte
Alexandrine's Lawyer
Josiane Balasko
Sophia
Jean-Pierre Sentier
Jean's Lawyer
Féodor Atkine
Isabelle Petit-Jacques
Therapists
Cynthia Gavas
Eric Franklin
Simon de la Brosse
B.P.M. Inspectors
Jean-Marc Stehle
Juvenile Magistrate
Josiane Balasko
Sophia
Gérard Touratier
Jean's Father/General
Christophe Bernard
Policeman
Bérangère Chendynski
Louise
Michel Dufresne
Bus Conductor
Steve Dahan
Young Jean
Heidi Brouzeng
B.P.M. Delinquent
Patrick Dassac
Prison Guard

9,551 feet
106 minutes

Dolby stereo
In colour
Anamorphic
Subtitles

Twelve-year-old Alexandrine and her younger brother Pierre are playing in the woods; when Jean, their father, approaches and attempts to touch her she runs away. At school, a story that Alexandrine has written alerts her teacher to the possibility that the girl's home life is not all that it might be. When the teacher talks to Alexandrine's parents, Jean and Marie simply attribute their daughter's behaviour to her age.

Following her teacher's advice that she should tell someone if there is anything wrong, Alexandrine goes to the police and informs them that her father molests her. Jean refutes the allegations. Finding it hard to gain the confidence of the children, Sophia, a counsellor, meets Alexandrine, who admits that she feels tiny and helpless. At home, Alexandrine overhears Pierre asking Jean to leave him alone. The two children run away. After spending a night in a disused building, Alexandrine goes to the police. Marie and Jean are questioned. The mother is blamed for negligence but is not charged; the father is released from custody but is instructed to have no contact with his children pending investigation. However, Jean tells Marie that he needs to talk to his daughter; she takes him to see Alexandrine secretly and leaves them together. On Alexandrine's birthday, Jean visits them, much to Marie's annoyance; he justifies himself with a hysterical outburst.

Sophia and the magistrate argue over the court case; he tells her he can do nothing without concrete proof. Later Alexandrine admits to Sophia that she has seen her father; Jean is imprisoned. When questioning Alexandrine the magistrates hear her talk of a black, threatening shadow; when they ask whether it is Jean, she is silent.

Marie, undergoing family therapy, is starting to see the truth. Jean receives a letter from his sister that reveals that both of them were abused by their father. After the trial Jean sees two therapists to whom he explains his silence during the trial as one bred of constant fear, his memory of seeing his father abusing his sister, his uncontrollable abuse of his own daughter and his desire to be cured. At the beach, Alexandrine and Pierre play; she is no longer terrified of the water.

If there are subjects that prove to be limit-cases when it comes to their cinematic treatment, child abuse is certainly among them. In *A Shadow of Doubt* Aline Issermann opts to treat the subject by way of a psychological thriller that hinges on whether the allegations of the young daughter against her father are taken seriously by the police and the judiciary. In this way Issermann shifts the emphasis away from the potential sensationalism of the act of abuse itself towards its repercussions within the family and in the wider society. Such an approach makes the film's action necessarily reactive, having as its centre a black hole of implied horror, exactly the shadow of doubt that generates the film's dynamic of guilt, recrimination and legal machinations.

In the film's use of the shadow as a symbol both of individual evil and of a generalised, aberrant 'other', Issermann is to some extent recalling Fritz Lang's *M*. But whereas Lang used sociopathic desire as a means to focus on an equally ruthless opportunism at work within criminal and judicial worlds alike, Issermann, while cultivating the silences and suspicions of the psychological thriller, inserts her film within the more intimist vein that Ginette Vincendeau has identified as a mas- ▶

◀ ter-narrative of French cinema, that of the father-daughter relationship.

It is in the rendition of this relationship that the film is most interesting. *A Shadow of Doubt* is a film of faces shot in CinemaScope and in set-ups where close-ups and shallow-focus two-shots predominate. This approach is judicious and striking, and has an intense cumulative power because its close-up strategy accommodates a host of elements central to the film. The seismic shock that Alexandrine's allegation sends through the family transforms all their interactions into barely concealed and often explicit negotiations with and reactions to the doubt and fear that come to infest the home. Hence all the close-ups become part of one prolonged set of reaction-shots played out with various modulations. Which is as it should be, for as Jacques Aumont demonstrates in his excellent study of the face in cinema *Du visage au cinéma*, the close-up is an invention of the silent cinema that offers the human face as a "readable landscape" of clues available for scrutiny in the absence of the spoken word. When, as is the case with Alexandrine's repeated allegations, the daughter's words carry less weight than the father's denials, then Issermann's camera brings us the faces on which the unspoken, unspeakable drama is being played out.

This strategy gets the highly focused and concentrated performances it requires to be effective from the central couple of Sandrine Blancke, who oscillates as Alexandrine between hypnotised entrapment within her own fear and resolute attempts to flee it, and Alain Bashung, whose sallow, aristocratic features ultimately crumble under the pressure of cultivating composure. Mireille Perrier as the mother is somewhat marginalised by the film's concentration on father and daughter, but her performance is stronger than Bashung's, simply because she nevertheless manages to make plausible her ultimate submission to the truth of her daughter's allegations.

Bashung's transformation from pseudo-schizophrenic abuser to jailed repentant is welcome, if less convincing. This has to do with a shift into melodrama in the latter part of the film that sits uncomfortably with the high stylisation and beady behaviourist observation. The latter dominates the film so effectively that the departures from it – which include an uncomfortably unimaginative "imaginary" sequence with Alexandrine as a bird trapped in the cage of the house and the *de rigueur* camcorder sequences of the father's objectification of his daughter – fare less effectively.

A Shadow of Doubt, while it holds more than it moves, deserves to be called brave for its content and attack. In the closing sequence on the beach the film revisits that *locus classicus* of cinematic childhood *Les Quatre cents coups*, but withholds its freeze-frame, offering instead a cleansing sense of liberation and possibility that is as palpable for the spectator as it is for Alexandrine.

Chris Darke

Le Parfum d'Yvonne

France 1994

Director: Patrice Leconte

Certificate
18
Distributor
Artificial Eye
Production Companies
Lambart Productions/ Zoulou Films/Centre Européen Cinématographique Rhône-Alpes/M6 Films
In association with Cofimage 5/ Investimage 4/Sofiarp 2
With the participation of Canal +/Centre National de la Cinématographie
Executive Producer
Monique Guerrier
Producer
Thierry de Ganay
Production Manager
Henri Brichetti
Assistant Directors
Michel Ferry
Zazie Carcedo
Marine Francou
Casting
Marie-Sylvie Caillierez-Pinquier
Adaptation/Dialogue
Patrice Leconte
Based on the novel *Villa Triste* by Patrick Modiano
Continuity
Maggie Perlado
Director of Photography
Eduardo Serra
Editor
Joëlle Hache
Production Designer
Ivan Maussion
Dresser
Pierre Cadeag
Special Effects
Bernard Chevreul
Jean-Pierre Suchet
Costume Design
Annie Périer
Make-up
Supervisor:
Judith Gayo
Jean-Christophe Roger
Hairstylists
Supervisor:
Paul De Fisser
Ghislaine Tortereau
Music
Pascal Estève
Music Conductor
Bernard Wystraete
Songs
"Sa Jeuneuse" by and performed by Charles Aznavour; "Goza Negra" by Bienvenido Fabian, "Plegaria A Laroye" by Eligio Varela, "Contestacion De El Marinero" by Tete Cabrera, Ricardo Rico, "Melao De Cana" by Mercedes Pedroso, "Cao Cao Mani Picao" by José Carbo Menendez, "Tamborilero" by Evelio Landa, "Mambo Del Amor" by Leonor Bianco, performed by Celia Cruz

Sound
Paul Lainé
Yves Osmu
Supervising Sound Editor
Reine Wekstein
Sound Recordist
Joel Rangon
Sound Mixer
Dominique Hennequin
Sound Effects
Pascal Chauvin
Dubbing
Michel Filippi
Recording
Annabel Gallard
Pascal Vuillemin
Stunt Co-ordinator
Roland Neunreuther

Cast
Jean-Pierre Marielle
René Meinthe
Hippolyte Girardot
Victor Chmara
Sandra Majani
Yvonne
Richard Bohringer
Uncle Roland
Paul Guers
Daniel Hendrickx
Corinne Marchand
Tilleuls Patron
Philippe Magnan
Pulli
Claude Dereppe
Roger Fossorié
Claude Aufaure
Spaniel-Headed Man
Isabelle Tinard
Tounette
Luc Palun
Jacky
Didier Lafaye
Concierge at the Hermitage
Louis-Marie Audubert
Singer
Marie Cosnay
Avenir Barmaid
Jean-Paul Nicolai
Discontented Neighbour
Mattias Nilsson
Alpine Chasseur
Brigitte Petit
Nude Dancer
Josephine Sourdel
Daisy Marchi
Brenda Clark
Post Office Worker
Arsène Jiroyan
Cintra Proprietor
Laurence Lerel
Cintra Barmaid
Raphael Simonet
O.A.S. Man

8,012 feet
89 minutes

In colour

Subtitles

A young deserter from the Algerian war arrives in a well-to-do lakeside holiday resort near the Swiss border. He takes on the name Victor Chmara, hoping to avoid detection and "above all do nothing". While waiting in the foyer of an elegant hotel he meets Yvonne, a beautiful *ingénue*. She introduces Victor to her great friend Dr René Meinthe, a flamboyant, ageing homosexual who drives a big American car. They dine together and Victor is invited to a party at the house of a film director. Meinthe explains that Yvonne has just finished making a film and will soon be a big star. On the way to the party Victor and Yvonne take a side-track into a forest and make love.

They take a hotel room together. Victor tells Yvonne he is a count and that he lives by selling his father's collection of rare butterflies. In between their love-making sessions, Victor reads to Yvonne from her favourite book: Maurois' *History of England*.

Yvonne and Meinthe enter the Houligant Cup, a bizarre cross between a beauty contest and a classic car competition. Yvonne and Meinthe are by far the most peculiar competitors: Meinthe wears a fez and flying goggles; Yvonne feigns sleep while her Great Dane runs alongside the car. As she sweeps from the car, Meinthe throws a rose to the jury. The main judge, playboy skier Daniel Hendrickx, is impressed and they win the competition thanks to his casting vote.

Yvonne takes Victor to visit her Uncle Roland, a local car mechanic. Victor tells of his plans to go with Yvonne to America and make her a big star in Hollywood. Uncle Roland says that Yvonne will never make it because she is too lazy and too provincial. At the station, Victor waits with their bags to begin their journey to America. Yvonne does not turn up. He returns to town where he is told Yvonne has gone off with Hendrickx.

Years later Victor returns to the town and bumps into Meinthe in a bar. Meinthe has become a sad old drunk and Victor rescues him from being beaten up. They decide to go and eat together, but on the steep mountain road on the way to the restaurant Meinthe says he will show Victor something he has never seen. He asks Victor to step out of the car. Meinthe then drives off the edge of the cliff to his death.

The story of *Le Parfum d'Yvonne* is told by Victor as he stares, melancholic, into a fire. As he narrates, shadows and the reflections of flames glance across his face. This happens in the present while the main stories (Victor's love affair with Yvonne and the shorter episode when Victor returns to the town) are extended flashbacks. We do not know why Victor is staring into a fire until the end of the film when, in a grotesque twist, the flames turn out to come from the burnt-out wreck of Meinthe's car. Like so much of Patrice Leconte's film-making, this is clever, beautifully crafted, and deeply sick.

Patrice Leconte is an *auteur* – he writes his own scripts and takes pride in what is often very striking photography. Auteurism simply guarantees that a cineaste's vision is his or her own; it doesn't guarantee that cineaste's world view. So Leconte's creepy little world is peopled with voyeurs, nightmarish eccentrics and women whose name is frailty. It also reeks of death. The two films which made Leconte famous in Britain, *Monsieur Hire* and *The Hairdresser's Husband*, both end with the death of one of the main protagonists in miserable circumstances: Hire plummets from a Paris rooftop; the hairdresser throws herself into the canal. Leconte's last film, *Tango*, begins with a happy misogynist blithely murdering his wife and her lover before beginning his quest to kill another man's wife.

Although *Le Parfum* is an altogether gentler film than we are used to from Leconte, it still reeks of death. Meinthe's suicide is, in fact, an act of considerable vitality compared to the living death which is the existence of Yvonne and Victor. They waft around languorously like anaemic shades. Presumably Leconte was aiming at some kind of ghostliness in these characters. Victor is clearly haunted by his past. But it is hard to watch a whole film as if through muslin gauze.

Le Parfum d'Yvonne is based on Patrick Modiano's *Villa Triste*, a slight but enjoyable novel which Leconte renders quite faithfully except in one crucial way – he has changed the ages of the main characters. In the novel, Victor is 18 years old (the sort of age you would be if you had deserted from the conscripted army that went to Algeria) and René Meinthe is an effervescent young man, not an eccentric old queen. This adaptation makes the characters' behaviour a good deal more sordid than in Modiano's original. It's quite romantic, even heroic for an adolescent to decide to change his name and go incognito for a whole summer; for someone of Hippolyte Girardot's age (at least 35), it's just sad. Leconte claimed that when he read the novel this is how he imagined the characters. But then he fills his films with adults who act like adolescents – the existence of genuine youthfulness hadn't crossed his mind. The effect is something like watching those grown men who get turned on by dressing up in nappies.

Quite why distributors think that Leconte's pre-digested Frenchness is more suitable for British cinemagoers than more solid fare like Téchiné or Pialat or Godard is something of a mystery. Not that we don't get to see the work of these more challenging directors in the end. But Leconte's stuff comes to us just after it is released in France. Perhaps it is the 'Gallic' combination of love and death that Leconte so shamelessly trades in that is supposed to appeal. More likely, it's the 'naughty-naughty' factor that makes Leconte's films so very marketable. There's nothing here to rival the minute-long slow-motion cleavage scene in *The Hairdresser's Husband*. But Leconte still finds plenty of excuses for sticking his camera up actress Sandra Majani's skirt – he doesn't need one of the characters to be looking that way either. Like that other ersatz import *fromage frais*, this film is very easy on the palate – but it too leaves an unpleasant aftertaste.

Martin Bright

El Patrullero (Highway Patrolman)

USA/Mexico 1991

Director: Alex Cox

Certificate
15
Distributor
Metro Tartan
Production Companies
Together Brothers Productions/Ultra Films
For Cable Hogue Company Ltd/ Marubeni Corporation
Executive Producers
Sammy O.Masada
Kuniaki Negishi
Co-executive Producer
Naoki Tachikawa
Producer
Lorenzo O'Brien
Co-producer
Jean Michel Lacor
Associate Producer
Brant Reiter
Production Co-ordinators
Virginia Hardy
Los Angeles:
Yukiko Sakamura
Debbie Diaz
Production Manager
Alejandra Liceaga
Location Managers
Pablo Buelna
Catherine Nancey
Casting
Miguel Sandoval
Claudia Becker
Assistant Directors
Rene Villareal
Javier Duran Escalona
Joaquin Silva
Screenplay
Lorenzo O'Brien
Continuity
Maury Carvajal Santillan
Director of Photography
Miguel Garzon
Editor
Carlos Puente
Production Designer
Cecilia Montiel
Art Directors
Bryce Perrin
Homero Espinoza
Set Decorator
Brigitte Broch
Special Effects
Federico Farfan
Costume Design
Manuela Loaeza
Uniforms:
Tolita Figueroa
Wardrobe Co-ordinator
Cristina Salgado
Make-up
Maria Eugenia Luna
Hairstylist
Maria De Los Angeles Rico
Title Design
Robert Dawson
Music
Zander Schloss
Additional Music Performed by
Drums:
Matt Tecu
Drum Tracks/Vocals:
Killer D
Songs/Music Extracts
"El Patrullero" by Zander Schloss, Tito Larriva, John Denny, Lorenzo O'Brien, performed by Tito Larriva, Zander Schloss, Matt Tecu; "Dios Nunca Muere" by Macedonio Alcala, "De Torreon a Lerdo" by Pioquinto Gonzalez, performed by Jose Diaz y Sus Morenos; "Se Tambalea" by Ramiro Leija Chavez, performed by Rivalez Del Norte; "La Pistola Y el Corazon" by David Hidalgo, Louis Perez, performed by Rivales Del Norte; "Los Laureles" performed by Mariachi Potosino; "Noticiero Del Norte" theme music, by Philip Miller; "Cumbia 409", "Cumbia 410" by Lucia Alvarez
Sound Supervisor
Carlos Puente
Sound Editors
Todd Toon
Kini Kay
Stewart Nelson
Zigmund Gron
Peter Brancaccio
Betty Burkhart
Charles Ritter
Sound Engineers
Roberto Munoz
Music:
Carlo Nuccio
Ultra Stereo Engineers
Bruce Murphy
Dan W. Victor Jnr
Sound Re-recordists
Stanley Kastner
Greg Steele
Sound Effects Supervisors
Christopher Sheldon
Dane A. Davis
Sound Effects
Danetracks
Film Extracts
RoboCop (1987)

Cast
Roberto Sosa
Pedro Rojas
Bruno Bichir
Anibal Guerrero
Vanessa Bauche
Maribel
Zaide Silvia Gutierrez
Griselda Marcos
Pedro Armendariz Jnr
Sergeant Barreras
Malena Doria
Abuela
Towi Islas
Emilio
Ernesto Gomez Cruz
Commander Navarro
Mike Moroff
Commander Sanchez
Jorge Russek
Mr Mateos
Ana Bertha Espin
Mrs Sanchez
Eduardo Lopez Rojas
Mr Rojas
Maricruz Najera
Mrs Rojas
Adjari Chazaro
Isabel
Carlos Alvarez
Luis
Karl Braun
Alex Cox
Ron Stoliar
Gringos
Guillermo Rios
Lieutenant Perez
Arturo Farfan
Trucker
Damian Alcazar
Alejandro Bracho
Suspects
Gabriel Pingarron
Assistant Inspector
Jorge Fegan
Bus Driver
Rene Pereyra
Mechanic
Gerardo Zepeda "Chiquilin"
Guard
Mauricio Rubi
Drunk Driver
Sergio Calderon
Passenger
Moises Ivan
Governor's Son
Alonso Echanove
Dr Bolanos
Magda Rodriguez
Beautiful Woman
Regino Herrera
Old Barman
Gerardo Moscoso
Governor
Claudia Becker
Mother Consuelo
Dolores Heredia
Radio Dispatcher
Victorino Porcayo
Operator
Ana Rittner
TV Reporter

9,410 feet
105 minutes

Ultra stereo
In colour

Subtitles

After graduating from the National Highway Patrol Academy in Mexico City, Pedro Rojas is sent to work the isolated roads of northern Durango. At first, he attempts to strictly enforce the law, despite the Academy's teaching, and the common belief among patrolmen – articulated by his colleague and friend, Anibal – that they can hardly get by without accepting bribes.

When Pedro pulls over a young woman, Griselda, she talks her way out of a fine and swiftly seduces him. Soon, Pedro and Griselda are married, and the birth of a daughter quickly follows. Griselda begins to complain about the meagreness of Pedro's earnings; while, at work, Pedro's superior upbraids him for not hitting the required quota of tickets, and gives him the patrolman's short straw – the pig road. There Pedro's resistance to bribes weakens. Depressed, he visits a local club, gets drunk and sleeps with a prostitute, Maribel. When he finally gets home, Griselda's anger is quietened when he shows her his illicit takings.

At work, after catching up with the drivers of a wayward, speeding car, Pedro lets his guard slip and is shot in the leg. Barely conscious, he sees a vision of his father, who insists that Pedro give up his patrol job. After a spell in hospital, Pedro learns that his father has died. His problems get worse: he insults Maribel, whom he is getting close to; crashes his car; and arrests the governor's son, making trouble for his superiors. Then, when Anibal springs a trap on some drug dealers, Pedro's car breaks down and by the time he reaches his friend, he can only watch him die. Pedro determines to catch the drug gang.

Doing some routine work, he is asked by a woman to come and visit her ill daughter. The daughter turns out to be Maribel, suffering cold turkey; she refuses to reveal who her drug supplier is. However, Pedro tracks down the gang; he lets the runners go but takes the load and stashes it, all apart from the drugs he takes to Maribel, with which carrot he persuades her to go home to her mother.

Pedro follows up his catch by intercepting a drug delivery by helicopter, in the process shooting one of the drug gang. For his achievement, he is honoured, but he decides to resign from the force, sick of the corruption. His job now is to take care of Griselda's family ranch. He also agrees to support Maribel after she threatens to return to the brothel.

About Alex Cox's films, one thing that can be said with certainty is that they are unusual. *Walker* (1987) told the tale of an 1850s American mercenary in Nicaragua through 1980s anachronisms (*Newsweek* covers, limousines). Its predecessor, *Straight to Hell* (also known as *Straight to Video*) endeavoured to parody the spaghetti western with a cast of rock stars and rag mag jokes. Next to these tortured attempts at novelty, his punk biopic *Sid and Nancy* (1986) seems a positively straight and competent piece of work.

His debut *Repo Man* apart, the wilful novelty has not amounted to much. In *Repo Man*, the off-the-wall, whimsical approach to its account of the L.A. auto-repossessions trade worked as an apt and witty short-cut into the absurdities which can arise between men and their toys. Otherwise, Cox's experiments, rather than furnish us with enlightening hybrids, have tended to produce clumsy monsters.

The most curious element of his latest hybrid, filmed in Spanish, is its 'magic realist' touches. The film is shot, for a large part, with an eye to making its realism as dirty as possible – eg. a close-up of a rotten pig sliced up on a dusty roadside – but the 'magic' occasionally intrudes. Most bizarrely, during Pedro's session with a shrink, a Day of the Dead emblem suddenly materialises on the carpet. What this offers beyond an easy (dis)embodiment of the exotic – we're in Mexico, where things don't happen quite the way they do in Kent – is not clear. Since the film's writer Lorenzo O'Brien, also Cox's partner in Together Brothers Productions, was born in Peru and raised in Mexico, he might have avoided cultural cliché. In his defence, it seems that the Mexican public did take to the film.

El Patrullero's style is otherwise marked by extensive use of hand-held camera and scenes shot in 'real time'. The two combine well when tracking Pedro's vain attempt to reach Anibal, who has been attacked by a drug gang. Rather than underline the discovery of the body, Cox wisely chooses to draw the scene's emotional force from the limping Pedro's struggle. He is frustrated, guilty, and already half convinced he will arrive too late, and the camera stays with his desperate on-foot chase: Pedro struggling, dragging his injured leg, the camera struggling with him. Elsewhere, for example when Griselda jumps on her drunken husband, swift, sharp movements are caught as if by a well-placed, nimble documentarist. Effective use is also made of the Mexican locations, especially when characters are followed moving from the sleazy town with its gaudy show of worldliness to the vast, arid landscape beyond.

The script is hardly as compelling. Apparently, the Japanese financiers who backed the film explained their interest to Cox and his team by identifying a samurai story within the script. They noted its central character struggling to hold onto a code of honour in a corrupt world. Parallels can indeed be forced out – our hero fights against temptation; weak, he succumbs; later, he repents and falls on his (metaphorical) sword. Still, the Japanese backers are to be envied their imaginative leap.

The film is not particularly poor, simply unengaging. O'Brien and Cox set out to portray the life of a little, muddled man, coming to terms with life's compromises. There's nothing wrong with muddled characters; they are, after all, the stuff of drama. The trouble is that Pedro's concerns, his work, his soul searching are made to seem all *too* little. He is put through all the right hoops, his progress tracing the classic curve of the decent man who resists and later succumbs to temptation; and yet there is little to wrestle with. It is as if all the moments which provoke changes of mind are skipped over. Certainly, reasons are given – Pedro is under pressure from his wife and lover – but they are presented cursorily. We are shown him changing, but never given reasons to persuade us why this should happen.

Perhaps to lament the absence of psychological meat is to long for the sort of film Cox and O'Brien were determined *not* to make. A theme of their stated intentions is to create something different from a Hollywood film, "more naturalistic." In their terms, that might mean avoiding the all too simple shape of melodrama, but here it also results in something inconsequential.

Robert Yates



Cop on the rocks: Roberto Sosa

Police Academy: Mission to Moscow

USA 1994

Director: Alan Metter

Certificate
PG
Distributor
Warner Bros
Production Company
Warner Bros
Producers
Paul Maslansky
Russia:
Leonid Vereschagin
Co-producer
Donald L. West
Associate Producer
Suzanne Lore
Production Associate
Sasha Maslansky
Production Managers
Donald West
Moscow:
Alexander Nakhimson
Hungary:
George Kuntner
Location Managers
Eugeny Galinsky
Alexey Karpushin
Alexey Rudensky
Anatoly Ermolin
Natalia Shahnazarova
Alexander Delvig
Assistant Directors
Alex Hapsas
Alexander Yurchikov
Moscow:
Alexander Zelenkov
Casting
Melissa Skoff
Screenplay
Randolph Davis
Michele S. Chodos
Script Supervisor
Sheila Wilson
Director of Photography
Ian Jones
Camera Operator
Buda Gulyas
Opticals
Pacific Title
Editor
Dennis Hill
Production Designer
Frederic Weiler
Art Director
Ilia Amoorsky
Set Decorator
Sergey Shiriaev
Set Dresser
Tamara Garanch
Special Effects
Co-ordinators
Gene Grigg
Michael Clifford
Costume Design
Natalia Dzubenko
Wardrobe Supervisor
Maria Yuresko
Make-up
Katalin Elek
Hairstylist
Erzsebet Racz
Title Design
Judith Kahn Inc
Moving Impressions
Titles
Cinema Research
Corporation
Music
Robert Folk
Music Editor
Doug Lacky
Song
"Am I Blue?" by Grant
Clarke, Harry Akst
Choreography
Boris Baranovsky
Supervising Sound Editor
Clancy Troutman
Sound Editors
Sam Gemette
Daniel Thomas
Michael Virnig
Randall K. Tomlin

ADR Editors
Gonzo
Tally Paulos
Sound Mixer
Steve Nelson
Music Recordist/Mixer
Steve Sykes
ADR Mixer
Beau Biggart
Foley Mixer
Albert Gomez
Sound Re-recordists
James G. Williams
Joseph Citarella
Arthur Torgersen
Sound Effects Editor
William Fox
Foley Artists
Casey J. Crabtree
James Bailey
Circus Adviser
Victor Shishkin
Magic Tricks
Alexander Popov
Stunt Co-ordinators
Julius LeFlore
Russia:
Sergey Vorobyev

Cast
George Gaynes
Commandant Lassard
Michael Winslow
Sergeant Jones
David Graf
Sergeant Tackleberry
Leslie Easterbrook
Captain Callahan
G. W. Bailey
Captain Harris
Christopher Lee
Commandant
Alexander Rakov
Ron Perlman
Constantine Konali
Claire Forlani
Katrina Sergetova
Charlie Schlatter
Cadet Connors
Richard Israel
Adam Sharp
Gregg Berger
Lieutenant Talinsky
Vladimir Dolinsky
Bellboy
Pamela Guest
Stuart Nissbet
Anchorpeople
Davis St. James
News Director
Valery Yaramenko
Mikhail
Vadim Dolgachov
Leonid
Bob Iannaccone
Training Sergeant
Carolyn Kelson
Mary
Nikolai Pastukhov
Patriarch
Olga Anokhina
Russian Mother
Sergey Danilevitch
Lecturer
Alexander Skorokhod
Yeltsin
Sasha Maslansky
Cadet
Oleg Groonevitch
Igor Semenkov
Andrei Vishnyakov
Russian Police Cadets
Konstantin Denakhin
Motorcycle Cop
Sergey Reusenko
Serge
Alexander Tiutin
Boris
Alexander Peskov
Hitman

Maria Vinogradova
Old Woman in
Gorky Park
Andrei Annensky
Russian Boy with Bike
Zaven Martirosian
Ringmaster
Julius LeFlore
Piano Player
Pavel Sanikov
Conductor
Dmitry Chernigovsky
Dapper Man
Villie Golovko
Mafia Thug
Amanda LeFlore
Buxom Assistant
Michael Bolotin
Vladimir Salnikov
Andrei Bolotin
Rakov's Guards
Vladimir Goriushin
Russian Father
Platon Gorushin
Russian Son
Nastia Gorushina
Russian Daughter
Pavel Ostrouktov
Priest in Cemetery
Natalia Pozdniakova
Katrina's Replacement
Translator

Yakov Dyrda
Min Dabashinskas
Willie Golovko
Mafia Hoods
Sasha Volkov
Yuri Sysoev
Bodyguards
The Chernievsky Group
Circus Acrobats
Zemskovi
Circus Acrobat
Elena Vorobieva
Circus Rope-climber
Alexander Diamandi
Yuri Yermachenkov
Circus Clowns
Michel Clerte
Michel Lavandet
Olivier Prosper
Olivier Renard
BMX Championship
Bike Team
Svetlana
Prima Ballerina

7,425 feet
82 minutes

Dolby stereo
In colour

Russian Mafia boss Constantine Konali is behind 'the Game', a computer game which has taken the world by storm. Fearful of Konali's plans, Boris Yeltsin orders Moscow Police Chief Rakov to deal with him. Rakov telephones the Police Academy's Commandant Lassard and asks for his help. Lassard and his five-strong team – Jones, Tackleberry, Callahan, Harris and Connors – arrive in Moscow and are met at the airport by Rakov and his subordinates Talinsky and Katya. However, Lassard is separated from them when he mistakes a car full of funeral mourners for his limousine.

Rakov attempts to brief the group, but assorted bouts of breaking wind from the Americans and his own temperamental roll-up map turn the meeting into a shambles. Meanwhile, Konali orders his American computer expert Adam Sharp to perfect 'The New Game', which features a secret code-breaker device which will enable him to access any computer system. After pursuing various investigations, the Police Academy team arrive at Konali's casino in assorted disguises and Konali is captivated by Callahan, who poses as a singer and goes home with him.

The team converge on a ballet performance where they believe Konali will close an important deal. Harris and Tackleberry appear on stage in disguise and confront Konali in mid-performance, but it turns out he tipped them off himself to make fools of them. Callahan is kidnapped by Konali and taken to his house in the country. The group give chase and the trail eventually leads to his restaurant, where Lassard is dining with the funeral mourners. Mistaking Konali's office door for the toilet, Lassard surprises him and a sword fight ensues. Lassard prevails and Konali is arrested. Rakov thanks Lassard and his team in a public ceremony in Red Square.

The seventh film in the *Police Academy* series is also the first since 1989. Between 1984 and 1989 the films were produced at the depressingly regular rate of one per year. So how do we explain the long gap between numbers six and seven? Perhaps producer Paul Maslansky needed to be inspired by the end of the Cold War before making this decisive contribution to global comedy, world peace and international understanding. If so, one hopes that *Police Academy 8*, *9* and *10* will be put on hold until after free elections in China, North Korea and Iraq.

To say that the series had run out of steam by 1989 would hardly be an understatement, but apart from the now somewhat jaded novelty value of real Moscow locations, what's on offer here is precisely the same brand of prejuvenile slapstick as before. People bump into things and fall over; then bump into more things and fall over again. For example, Harris has a sewer full of food poured over him and only deploys his surveillance periscope so that a dog can urinate on it. And so it goes on. Most of the gags are horribly mistimed, with the scrappy editing hurriedly pushing the story along with all the finesse of a bowling ball demolishing a set of skittles. Christopher Lee is literally left hanging – to his roll-up map – for three quarters of the running time and the sequence in which Connors is tossed around by circus acrobats looks less like a stunt than a half-hearted rehearsal that wasn't saved in the editing room.

All that said, there is one extraordinary moment in the film. During the car chase sequence, the camera pans across the road to follow the action and momentarily, but quite deliberately, pauses to reflect upon the Russian parliament building, the so-called 'White House'. Its upper floors still blasted and blackened as a result of the abortive anti-Yeltsin coup of October 1993, this potent icon of real political history suddenly bursts into the farcical proceedings in a throwaway fashion that is surreal, supremely tasteless and yet somehow exactly right.

The movie was shut down for several days because the location unit just happened to be in Moscow during the coup attempt. Once Yeltsin regained control, production resumed and the decision was presumably taken to film around the still not quite cool White House. But imagine a 1963 Russian comedy with scenes filmed in Dallas' Dealey Plaza, or perhaps a 1993 farce filmed in the ruins of the L.A. earthquake. These would certainly be frowned upon. But, like a shark or Rupert Murdoch, a Hollywood franchise movie is capable of swallowing almost anything on its way to conquering and colonising world markets (and the plot here about a computer game, with an *American* inventor, that captivates all ages smacks more than a little of wish fulfilment).

The Russians already have McDonalds and now their Head of State (or at least, his lookalike) is a supporting player in a *Police Academy* movie. Joe Stalin must be spinning in his grave – and, if they were still alive, J. Edgar Hoover and Joe McCarthy would die laughing.

Tom Tunney

Smoking/ No Smoking

France 1993

Director: Alain Resnais

Certificate
PG
Distributor
Mainline Pictures
Production Companies
Arena Films/Camera
One/France 2 Cinema
With financial
assistance from
Canal +/Centre
National de la
Cinématographie/
ProcirepAlia Film/
Vega Film
Executive Producer
Bruno Pésery
Associate Producer
Michel Seydoux
Production Manager
Dominique Toussaint
Location Manager
Jacques Quinternet
Stage Manager
Pascal Palite
Assistant Directors
Daniel Deleforges
Olivier Trémolet
Screenplay
Alan Ayckbourn
Based on his plays
Intimate Exchanges
Adaptations/Dialogue
Jean-Pierre Bacri
Agnès Jaoui
Translation
Anne Dutter
Georges Dutter
Continuity
Sylvette Baudrot
Director of Photography
Renato Berta
Editor
Albert Jurgenson
Set Design
Jacques Saulnier
Set Decorators
Jacques Quinternet
Marc Pinquier
Drawings
Floc'h
Special Effects
Big Bang
Costume Design
Jackie Budin
Wardrobe Supervisor
Anne Varenne
Make-up/Hair
Jackie Reynal
Patrick Villain

Music
John Pattison
Music Director/
Orchestrations
Paul Bateman
Music Extract
"Symphony No. 4,
The Inextinguishable"
by Carl Nielsen,
performed by
The Scottish National
Orchestra
Sound
Gérard Lamps
Bernard Bats
Sound Re-recordist
Jacques Lévy
Sound Effects
Pascal Chauvin
Pascal Dedeye
Narrator
Peter Hudson

Cast
Smoking:
Sabine Azéma
Celia Teasdale
Sylvie Bell
Irene Pridworthy
Pierre Arditi
Toby Teasdale
Miles Coombes
Lionel Hepplewick
Joe Hepplewick

No Smoking:
Sabine Azéma
Celia Teasdale
Rowena Coombes
Sylvie Bell
Irene Pridworthy
Josephine Hamilton
Pierre Arditi
Toby Teasdale
Miles Coombes
Lionel Hepplewick

Smoking:
13,116 feet
146 minutes

No Smoking:
13,247 feet
147 minutes

Dolby stereo
In colour
Subtitles

Smoking: Hutton Buscel, Yorkshire. Five years ago, in June. Spring-cleaning, Celia Teasdale pauses in the garden for a cigarette...

Lionel Hepplewick, handyman at the school where her husband Toby is headmaster, offers his services as gardener, but Celia is undecided. As Lionel investigates the garden shed, Celia's home-help, Sylvie Bell, asks if he is taking her out on Friday... Lionel has made other arrangements. *Five days later: A Gardener in Love.* Toby sits gloomily on the patio as Lionel clears the shed. Celia announces to her husband that their marriage is finished. On impulse, she suggests to Lionel that they become partners in a bakery. Full of apologies, Toby attempts reconciliation... Celia insists on a separation. *Five weeks later: Affairs in a Tent.* School Sports Day. Miles Coombes, Chairman of the Governors, watches Celia's preparations in the refreshments tent. Unfortunately, Lionel's only contribu-

tion to the catering partnership is an inedible loaf. Celia collapses with a nervous breakdown... Contrite, Toby comes to her aid. *Five years later: A Funeral*. Attending the funeral of local poet Joe Hepplewick, Lionel's father, Toby and Celia discuss the possibility of a recuperative holiday. Now married and a successful caterer, Lionel speculates about their abortive partnership, but Celia is inattentive.

OR: As Celia collapses, Lionel comes to the rescue. *Five Years later: A New Woman*. Briefly revisiting Hutton Buscel, Celia runs into Toby in the churchyard. They both now live alone, and Celia controls a thriving food business. Lionel, her chauffeur, escorts her away.

OR: Celia gives the marriage another chance, a little disconcerted at Lionel's enthusiasm for her partnership fantasy. *Five weeks later: Events on a Hotel Terrace*. Holidaying with Toby, Celia finds Lionel is one of the hotel waiters, declaring his love for her amid a blizzard of afternoon teas. In a panic, she tells Toby about him... Toby collapses in the hotel foyer. *Five years later: A Funeral*. Attending Toby's funeral with Miles, Celia finds Lionel is the gravedigger, still planning for their future together.

OR: Celia blames herself for Lionel's fixation, and Toby shrugs it off. *Five years later: A Service of Thanksgiving*. Toby and Celia, bickering as usual, wander the churchyard during a school service. Lionel, prosperous owner of a taxi firm, gives Celia a musical memento.

OR: Lionel agrees to take Sylvie out. *Five days later: The Self-Improving Woman*. Encouraged by Lionel to adopt a new image, Sylvie persuades Toby to give her private tuition. *Five weeks later: A Garden Fete*. Celia and Sylvie tend to Joe Hepplewick while preparing for the fete. Sylvie's interest in tuition is waning, but Toby is adamant she should continue. In a monkey costume, Lionel asks if she'll marry him... Sylvie is amenable. *Five years later: A Christening*. Hepplewick kids play in the churchyard as Sylvie and Lionel come to christen their latest. Sylvie reveals she gave up lessons with Toby because she was getting too fond of him.

OR: Sylvie has no wish to be married. *Five years later: Return of the Prodigal*. Unwell in the snowy churchyard, Toby finds Sylvie has come to interview him for a feminist magazine. She thanks him for having opened her eyes to the joys of education.

No Smoking: Hutton Buscel, Yorkshire. Five years ago, in June. Spring-cleaning, Celia Teasdale resists the temptation of a cigarette in the garden... Miles Coombes consults her about the Board's intention to fire Toby. Celia reveals that she too can put up with Toby no longer. Miles plans his speech to the Board, and gives Sylvie Bell, Celia's home-help, a message for Celia... Miles suggests they meet over a meal. *Five days later: Dinner on the Patio*. Celia and Miles share a bottle of wine while waiting for Toby and for Miles' wife, Rowena. Miles has persuaded the Governors to retain Toby, who wants him to intercede with Celia. Miles confesses he wants Celia to himself. They



Love and death in an English garden: Sabine Azéma

embrace in the garden shed, where Celia leaves him when Toby turns up. He asks her to give their marriage another chance. *Five weeks later: A Game of Golf*. Celia joins Miles and Toby on the golf course, but is disregarded. Rowena flirts with Toby but insists to Miles she still loves him, and asks for a poem... Miles responds; they embrace in a bunker. *Five years later: Easter Greetings*. Briefly revisiting Scarborough, Miles finds Celia in the churchyard at Toby's graveside. He returns to Australia with Rowena.

OR: Miles refuses to spout poetry; Rowena abandons him. *Five years later: A Triumph of Friendship*. Attending a school service, Celia meets Miles in the churchyard. She now has a successful career; he shares a London flat with the unemployed Toby.

OR: Miles' message to Celia is of loyalty to Toby. *Five days later: Confessions in a Garden Shed*. Miles and Rowena shelter from the rain in the Teasdales' shed. Admitting she has slept around because of Miles' neglect, Rowena locks him in. Sylvie releases him, and impulsively he invites her on a walk around the English coast... Sylvie declines the invitation; Miles locks himself in the shed. *Five weeks later: A One-Man Protest*. Toby is irritated at Miles' continuing occupancy of the shed. Lionel Hepplewick is sent to smoke Miles out, but Rowena throws his trousers on the bonfire and persuades Miles to èmerge... He has decided to start a new life, and leaves for the station. *Five years later: A Midnight Mass*. Briefly revisiting Hutton Buscel and the churchyard, Miles meets Sylvie (now married to Lionel) and Celia; both had almost forgotten him. Rowena reveals that, like Miles, she has a new but unreliable partner.

OR: On leaving the shed, Miles agrees to go home. *Five years later: A School Celebrates*. Fidgeting in the snowy churchyard as a thanksgiving service drones on, Rowena complains of boredom and takes Miles home to plan a holiday over lunch. *OR*: Sylvie accepts Miles' invitation. *Five weeks later: Love in the Mist*. As fog closes in, Miles and Sylvie, out hiking, find a clifftop hut; they take shelter but soon quarrel. Rowena unexpectedly intervenes... Rowena and Miles return home together. *Five years later: A Wedding*. Sylvie waits in the churchyard for her bridegroom, Lionel. Miles has agreed to give her away; Rowena ushers them into the church. *OR*: Angrily telling Rowena to leave, Miles strides into the fog and falls over a cliff. *Five years later: A Simple Ceremony*. Toby unveils a commemorative plaque to Miles in the churchyard shed, which is visited in turn by Rowena, Sylvie (now Mrs Hepplewick) and Celia.

Prefacing the two published volumes of his related series of plays *Intimate Exchanges*, Alan Ayckbourn provides a chart of the consequences stemming from a single opening scene. Sixteen divergent conclusions sprout from eight main events derived in turn from four sessions of enlightenment, two introductory encounters and one crucial moment of decision. This elaborate lineage substantially clarifies the order and logic of Ayckbourn's episodes; it should be required reading for his audiences – and now for viewers of Alain Resnais' film version – to avoid the otherwise inevitable confusion as to how each of the alternatives has arisen. Significantly, it reads like Ayckbourn's own precaution against chaos – a signal, perhaps, that for all the unpredictable twists in the lives of his characters, a shape can be found in the bewildering checks and renewals of their behaviour.

The chart also serves to expose weaknesses in the entire concept – for instance, that Ayckbourn gives us only a few examples of the infinite number of variations that could arise from any fragment of his drama, or that his selection of intervals between each event (five seconds, five days, five weeks, five years) capriciously avoids other potentially vital spans such as minutes, hours and months. The result of these forward leaps, conveniently for the dramatist, is that he can do much as he likes with his 'final' scenes, which involve partly the mere provision of information to bring the audience up to date, and partly an artificial element of surprise and comedy (as when Lionel turns up as a chauffeur or Sylvie as a reporter). In this way, the action proceeds in a staccato of climactic fade-outs, each followed by a renewed build-up – bags of fun but as inconsequential as a variety show. It might also be argued that the point about parallel universes is that they all happen at once and that to be scrupulous to his game-plan, Ayckbourn should require that all the derivations at each turn of the story are staged simultaneously, an experiment to which he would doubtless not be averse.

In gleefully accepting the Ayckbourn challenge, Resnais comes up with the Warholian device of two contiguous films in which, by deleting six of Ayckbourn's original scenes, he achieves a noticeable imbalance. It says something for the integrity of Ayckbourn's structure, despairing as one might initially be of linking each effect with its original cause, that the omission of one-fifth of it creates an uneasy hiatus in what is sensed, rather than clearly identified at the time, as a rigorously disciplined narrative flow. The missing branches, regarded by Resnais as "too typically English", leave room for a crop of dissensions about the painstaking artificiality of what remains.

The first obvious incongruity of *Smoking/No Smoking*, in fact, is that while its phoney outdoor settings are identified as 'Hutton Buscel', with a variety of sounds, signs, and distant voices to signify Englishness, its inhabitants all appear to be strikingly overdressed French immigrants engaged in a subtly Anglophobic charade. Whether or not French audiences find this a convincing portrayal of everyday life in Yorkshire, the persuasion for the rest of us has to be that there is intentionally nothing authentic about what we see. Instead we are asked to submit ourselves to a state of mind where previous rules no longer apply. Otherwise, the "hidden scaffolding" on which ▶

◀ Resnais likes to find his films constructed falls apart at the slightest tug, from the instant one recognises that Celia's decision to smoke or not to smoke has absolutely no bearing on who visits her: theoretically, both Lionel and Miles could arrive together or consecutively, their passions intact, their repercussions, for a good number of temporal fifths, much the same.

Faithfully translated (and neatly enhanced, as when Mahler and *malheur* become briefly entangled), Ayckbourn has to take the blame for such wilful contrivances, permissible in the heat of farce, as the invasion of the Teasdale shed by Miles and Rowena, the trouser-dropping episode, or the strange invisibility of the Hepplewick brood. In his wake, Resnais stages the frantic courting of Celia by Lionel with an avalanche of tea-time cakes, and the contrasting courtship of Sylvie by Lionel in an absurd ape costume, with such enjoyment that *Smoking*, the more comical half of his thesis, risks putting *No Smoking*, which hints at gloomier matters, into eclipse.

Given Resnais' lightness of touch, the weight of the action is carried by his two performers (with vital contributions, in wondrous shades, by costumier Jackie Budin and set-designer Jacques Saulnier). Sabine Azéma and Pierre Arditi respond magnificently to a unique invitation to show off, and do so without apparent exhaustion. If Celia has a touch too agonising a breakdown, and if the tetchy Miss Pridworthy and the amorphously punkish Sylvie are not altogether convincing, the Azéma charm ensures as usual that it doesn't matter at all, and Arditi's range of gruff, earnest and introspective suitors, each with a similar dark pain behind the eyes, remains an astonishing gallery of vulnerable portraits.

Through this virtuoso duet of role-changing, Ayckbourn's pageant becomes self-evidently the story of just two people, exploring a multiplicity of possible lives. They could even be just Celia who, at the moment of selecting or refusing a cigarette, takes time to imagine the future course of an existence in which she would naturally be idolised, her lovers ultimately (thanks to her marital loyalty) accepting substitute Celias (Sylvie and the elegantly promiscuous Rowena) in which her other qualities would be personified. Ironically, this dream of general fulfilment, no matter which direction it takes, terminates inescapably in capitulation and compromise, with marriages endured, ambitions laid aside, achievements hollow with regret and nostalgia. And although Miles, the idealist, champions a cyclical positivism ("when you see that all the choices you've made so far are getting you nowhere... you have to break out and start again"), Resnais and Ayckbourn give us 12 final graveyard scenes, settings for a perpetual litany, a barely-concealed scaffolding, of christenings, marriages, funerals, thanksgivings and remembrance.

Philip Strick

Staggered

United Kingdom 1993

Director: Martin Clunes

Certificate
15
Distributor
Entertainment
Production Company
Big Deal Pictures
Executive Producers
Chris Parkinson
Clifford Davis
Producer
Philippa Braithwaite
Line Producer
Helen Booth
Associate Producers
Paul Alexander
Simon Braithwaite
Production Co-ordinator
Nicki Gunning
Location Manager
Matt Steinmann
Assistant Directors
Richard Lingard
Geoff Dibben
Paul Higgins
Casting
Suzanne Crowley
Gilly Poole
Screenplay
Paul Alexander
Simon Braithwaite
Script Supervisor
Denise Ann Feeney
Director of Photography
Simon Kossoff
Aerial Photography
Aerial Camera Systems
Graphic Design
Louise Cornwell
Editor
Peter Delfgou
Production Designer
Iain Andrews
Art Director
Steve Ritchie
Storyboard Artists
Paul Alexander
Steve Ritchie
Special Effects
N.E.F.X.
Costume Design
Ralph Holes
Make-up
Beverley Pond-Jones
Make-up Effects
Creature Effects
Cliff Wallace
David Elsey
Alan Hedgcock
Brendan Lonergan
Hairstylist
Jamie Pritchard
Titles/Opticals
Cine Image
Music
Peter Brewis
Music Co-ordinator
Alan Lawrence
Songs/Music Extracts
"Right Fender Einstein", "No Big Shakes", "Good Morning Mr Magpie" by Johnny Dice, performed by The Johnny Dice Experience alias The Surfing Brides; "Just A Loser" by Tim Kashaisu, performed by Adrian Barry; "Choppin" by Jez Coad, "Whiplass Versus The Gun Goddess" by Johnny Dice, "Smooch", "High Times" by Johnny Dice, Jez Coad, performed by The Surfing Brides
Choreography
Roger The Swede
Sound Recordist
Geoff Neate
Music Recording/Mixing
Paul Hulme
Dubbing Mixer
Tony Anscombe
Surfing Brides Live Sound
Mick Anthony
Stunt Co-ordinator
Carlo Bianco

Cast
Martin Clunes
Neil Price
Michael Praed
Gary
John Forgeham
Inspector Lubbock
Anna Chancellor
Carmen Sfennipeg
Sylvia Syms
Mother
Sarah Winman
Hilary
Griff Rhys Jones
Graham
Michele Winstanley
Tina
Kate Byers
Jackie
David Kossoff
Elderly Man
Helena McCarthy
Elderly Woman
Sandy Poustie
Helicopter Pilot
Virginia McKenna
Flora
Steve Ritchie
Nude Man
Frank Helner
Rabbi
Steve Sweeney
Nutter
Dan Travers
Policeman
Dermot Crowley
Dr Barnet
Matthew Tucker
Frozen Man
Daisy Doodles
Little Girl
Jonathan Openshaw
Little Boy
Michael Medwin
Peter
Bill Gavin
Old Man in Hospital
Julia Deakin
Brenda
Annette Ekblom
Caroline
Desmond McNamara
Copper
Dickon Tolson
Happy Chef Waiter
George Rossi
Frederico
Paul Brightwell
Longcoat
Ian Michie
Milkman
Neil Morrissey
Videographer
Howard Jacobs
Cab Driver
Marjery Withers
Granny
Sion Tudor Owen
Best Man
Richard Syms
Vicar
Jake D'Arcy
Barra Pilot
Gary Murphy
Elvis
Amanda Hodge
Mrs Elvis
Abigail Hodge
Baby Elvis

8,564 feet
95 minutes

Dolby stereo
In colour

Neil Price, a put-upon toy demonstrator in a large London store, is preparing to marry his sweetheart Hilary. She used to go out with Neil's suave best friend Gary, until she caught him philandering in Domestic Appliances. On Neil's stag night, Gary drugs him and has him flown to a remote Scottish island. Neil wakes up naked on the beach, with three days to get back to London for his wedding. The island's only resident, a would-be nun turned recluse, rows him to the next island, and he phones the gloating Gary, who tells him his clothes and a plane ticket to Newcastle are in a locker at Inverness Airport. Neil hitches a lift on the plane of an obliging postman.

Just as his flight to Newcastle is coming in to land, Neil is arrested. A thousand stolen Sonic the Hedgehog dolls have been found in his flat, and Detective Inspector Lubbock is determined to pin the crime on him. Gary promises to get him a lawyer and give a message to Hilary, but does neither. Neil makes the mistake of annoying his cell-mate, and is rewarded with concussion and a broken arm. In hospital, he captures the interest of morbid pathologist Carmen Sfennipeg and is put to bed on a ward, his plaster cast handcuffed to the dogged Lubbock.

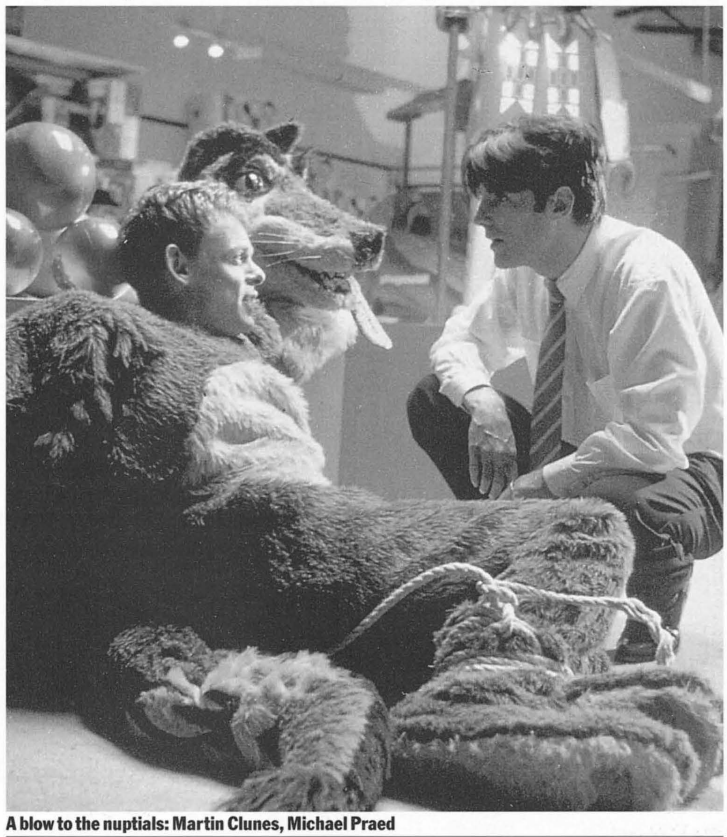
Neil escapes, stealing Carmen's car. He rings to tell her he has borrowed it, but while he does so, the car rolls over a cliff and is destroyed. He is given food and a lift by Graham, a travelling salesman; Graham insists on stopping in Solihull, where he plans to involve Neil in four-way sex. Neil escapes in Graham's car, but is soon arrested again. Hilary's snobbish mother visits him in his cell and tells him she will do anything to stop the wedding. In the meantime, Gary is inveigling Hilary with tall tales about Neil's history of broken engagements.

Both Graham and Carmen decide not to press charges and Neil is released. Carmen wants Neil to give her an insight into the criminal mind; over a greasy burger, she learns how boring he really is. But when an armed raider attempts to hold up the restaurant, Neil looks death in the face and laughs, and the raider is foiled. Impressed, Carmen tries, unsuccessfully, to seduce him.

With money Carmen gives him, Neil finally gets to London. Gary tells him of the fortune Hilary will inherit, and that she is now marrying him. He knocks Neil out and ties him up in a wolf suit. The wedding day dawns, and Carmen arrives in the toyshop to return the ring Neil had left in her car. He escapes from the costume and they rush together to the church, but miss the wedding. At the reception, Neil tells the shocked assembly the whole story, and fights with Gary. Hilary realises her mistake, but too late; Neil now realises that Carmen is the woman for him.

Martin Clunes, whose talents first entered the wider public domain through the less than inspiring portal of the Thames TV sitcom *Men Behaving Badly*, is not most people's idea of a renaissance man. But he pulls off a considerable coup here, simultaneously starring in and making his film directing debut with a likeable, well-organised and occasionally quite funny comedy that is thoroughly deserving of a large-scale cinema release, and might even end up making some money.

Staggered was financed with consider-



A blow to the nuptials: Martin Clunes, Michael Praed

able ingenuity via the government's Business Expansion Scheme, and it is an unashamedly commercial project. The intentions of writers Simon Braithwaite and 30-year-old TV comedy veteran Paul Alexander are clear from the start: to update the Ealing tradition via the snappy commercial sensibility of John Hughes without losing a distinctively British character; and by and large they succeed. Initially, the film struggles to break away from its rather tired premise – the stag night prank as dramatic device has seen enough service in soap opera and TV film to have earned a peaceful retirement – but once the central character is out on his own, *Staggered* picks up considerable comic momentum.

Clunes' performance is the key to the film's success. His protuberant ears, slouching gait and hangdog expression threaten to make him little more than a figure of fun, but he maintains a dignity and resilience in the face of spiralling misfortune that recalls Cary Grant in *North By North-West*. In the first of three climactic tests of his manhood, he confronts the armed would-be hamburglar with the authentic insouciance of a man pushed over the brink: "Is this a dry run – are you working up to a Burger King?"

Anna Chancellor does well too, transcending the limitations of a rather obvious 'sexy pathologist' role. And the worthy endeavours of the leading pair are supported by the inevitable posse of biggish-name character cameos which must now attend the birth of every British film comedy. Virginia McKenna's Scottish accent is a little shaky for soemone whose second name begins with Mc. Sylvia Sims is rather under-used as the evil mother, and the excellent John Forgeham's bad policeman part might have been more effective if less over-written. But Griff Rhys Jones' sex-crazed travelling salesman is funnier than anyone had a right to expect – his spiked codpiece all but steals the show – and although the idea of Michael Praed as a quasi-cockney charmer, rather than Robin Hood or Prince Michael of Moldavia, takes a bit of getting used to, it's well worth the effort.

The action is confidently, sometimes elegantly directed, much in the style of *Planes, Trains and Automobiles*. Only the home-made soundtrack has that depressing true-Brit 'made for TV' feel. Otherwise the film-makers make a virtue out of their environment: from scenic Scottish beaches to the broad expanses of a Solihull Travel-Lodge, British locations are judiciously and cinematically employed. There is the occasional inconsistency and the odd gratuitous touch of burlesque, but there is also a healthy absence of whimsy about the whole proceedings. The writers and director show a pleasing determination to set their film in Britain as it is, rather than as it was imagined to be 30 years ago, and if *Staggered* is not exactly a feast of laughter, it is still a million times funnier than *Leon the Pig Farmer*.

Ben Thompson

True Lies

USA 1994

Director: James Cameron

Certificate
15
Distributor
UIP
Production Company
Lightstorm Entertainment Inc
For 20th Century Fox
Executive Producers
Robert Shriver
Rae Sanchini
Lawrence Kasanoff
Producers
James Cameron
Stephanie Austin
Associate Producer
Pamela Easley
Production Supervisor
Paddy Cullen
Production Co-ordinators
Los Angeles:
Anne Hart
Washington D.C.:
Alison Sherman
Florida, Rhode Island:
Jacqui Popelka
Miniature Effects:
Lori Byers
Unit Production Managers
Scott Thaler
Patricia Whitcher
Location Managers
Supervisor:
Michael J. Burmeister
California:
Jim Morris
Florida Keys:
R. Colette Hailey
Miami:
Sam Tedesco
Washington D.C.:
Carol Flaisher
Additional:
Katherine Kallis
Visual Effects/Post-production Co-ordinator
Lauren Alexandra Ritchie
2nd Unit Directors
E.J. Foerster
Glenn Wilder
Assistant Directors
J. Michael Haynie
Aldric La'Auli Porter
Martin Jedlicka
David A. Ticotin
Patton Howell
Caldwell IV
Casting
Mali Finn
Associate:
Emily Schweber
Florida:
Ellen Jacoby
Additional:
Todd Thaler
ADR Voice:
LA Maddogs
Screenplay
James Cameron
Based on a screenplay by Claude Zidi, Simon Michael, Didier Kaminka
Script Supervisor
Sharron Reynolds
Director of Photography
Russell Carpenter
Underwater Photography
Peter Romano
Aerial Photography
David L. Butler
Camera Operators
Michael St. Hilaire
Paul Babin
James Muro
Steadicam Operator
James Muro
Video Graphics Supervisor
Scott Warner
Visual Effects
Digital Domain
Supervisor:
John Bruno
Producers:
Julia Gibson
Mike Chambers
Digital Effects Supervisor:
Jacques Stroweis
Digital Post-production Superivsor:
Price Pethel
Digital Effects Producer:
Teresa Cheng
Miniature Superivsor:
Patrick McClung
Photography:
Doug Smith
Mat Beck
Co-ordinator:
Crystal Dowd
Pyrotechnic Supervisor:
Joseph Viskocil
Pyrotechnician:
Emmet Kane
Supervising Animators:
Peter Farson
David Isyomin
Editor:
Allen Cappuccilli
Offline Compositing:
Jonathan Egstad
Storyboard Artist:
Brent Boates
Heat Signature Animation and Compositing:
Kyeng-Im Chung
Caleb J. Howard
Chris Hummel
Elizabeth Maxwell Keith
Anthony Mabin
John McLaughlin
Randall J. Rosa
Robert Small
Neville Spiteri
Missiles/Smoke Animation:
Sean Cunningham
Raffaella Fillipponi
Karen E. Goulekas
Digital Compositing:
Lisa Aycock
Jammie Friday
Feliciano Di Giorgio
Victor Jimenez
Candace Lewis
Diane Piepol
Fred Raimondi
Steven J. Scott
Martine Tomczyk
Digital Painters/Colorists:
Kevin Mack
Martha Snow Mack
Digital Recording Supervisor:
Robert Luciano
Digital Recording:
Jeff Kalmus
Model Crew Chiefs:
Alan Faucher
Mike Joyce
Modelmakers:
James Anka
Gilbert Draper
John Ferrari
Gerald McClung
Douglas Miller
Gary Rhodaback
Jon Warren
Model Painter:
Rachel Kelley
Miniature Helicopters:
Larry Jolly Miniatures
Motion Control Camera Operators:
Harry J. Alpert
John Higbie
Michael Steven Karp
SVSI Producer:
Robin L. D'Arcy
SVSI Miniature Effects Chiefs:
Leslie Ekker
John Stirber
SVSI Chief Modelmakers:
Chris Cowan
Henry Gonzales
SVSI Miniature Special Effects:
Richard Stuts
Manroy Goode
Scott Schneider
SVSI Lead Model Painter:
Ron Gress
Additional Visual Effects:
Pacific Data Images
Supervisor:
Jamie Dixon
Producer:
Daniel Chuba
Technical Supervisor:
Barb Meier
Animators:
Rebecca Marie
Cathy Wagner
Cleveland Mitchell
Amie Slate
Sean Dever
Al Arthur
Aliza Corson
Editor:
Shawn Broes
Film Operations Co-ordinator:
Audrey Chang
Production Co-ordinator:
Aaron "The Sushi" Dem
Cinesite Digital Film Centre:
Supervisor:
Brad Kuehn
Co-ordinators:
Michele Valillo
Gig Gagnon
Digital Artists:
Laurie George
Kevin Lingenfelser
James Valentine
Boss Film Corporation:
Supervisor:
Neil Krepela
Producer:
Jenny Fulle
Digital Matte Supervisor:
Michele Moen
Editor:
Scott Michael Keppler
Technical Directors:
Chris Roda
Marc Toscano
Suzanne Berger
Michael Fleming
Timothy Tompkins
Jason David Dowdeswell
Fantasy II Film Effects:
Supervisor:
Gene Warren
Producer:
Leslie Huntley
Camera Operator:
Christopher Warren
Roto Supervisor:
Bret Mixon
Optical Supervisor:
Betzy Bromberg
Optical Camera:
David Tucker
Additional Digital Effects
Pacific Title Digital Light Matters
Visual Effects Plate Crew
Chris Duddy
Marc Brown
Visual Effects Editor
Miller Drake
Graphics Design
Thomas M. Conroy
Editors
Conrad Buff
Mark Goldblatt
Richard A. Harris
Production Designer
Peter Lamont
Art Directors
Robert Laing
Michael Novotny
Set Design
Joseph Hodges
Set Decorator
Cindy Carr
Set Dresser
Glen Kennedy
Omega Sector Logo Design
Ron Cobb
Illustrators
Tom Cranham
Phil Norwood
Horse/Dog Sculptures
Jeremy Aiello
Mark Sisson
Special Effects Co-ordinators
Thomas L. Fisher
Scott R. Fisher
Special Effects Foremen
Andrew J. Miller
Bruce L. Minkus
AV-8A Harrier Created By
Donald Pennington Inc.
Mike Wheelwright
Jeremy Bishop
Ted Van Doorn
Miles Clayton
Costume Design
Marlene Stewart
Costume Supervisor
Lisa Lovaas
Make-up Supervisor
Jeff Dawn
Make-up Artists
Tania McComas
Richard Snell
Hairstylists
Key:
Peter Tothpal
Cynthia Romo
Luca Mace
Title Design
R/Greenberg Associates West Inc
Titles/Opticals
Pacific Title
Music
Brad Fiedel
Music Conductor
Shirley Walker
Orchestrations
Brad Fiedel
Shirley Walker
Music Supervisor
Randy Gerston
Music Editor
Allan Rosen
Songs/Music Extracts
"I Never Thought I'd See the Day" by Sade Adu, Leroy Asbourne, performed by Sade; "Alone in the Dark" by and performed by John Hiatt; "Sunshine of Your Love" by Pete Brown, Jack Bruce, Eric Clapton, performed by Living Colour; "Darkness Darkness" by Jesse Colin Young, performed by Screaming Trees; "More Than A Woman" by B. Gibb, R. Gibb, M. Gibb, performed by the Bee Gees; "The Blue Danube" by Johann Strauss, performed by The Philadelphia Orchestra; "Por Una Cabeza" by Carlos Gardel, performed by The Tango Project; "Entity" by and performed by Mother Tongue
Choreography
Lynn Hockney
Sound Design
Soundelux Inc
Supervising Sound Editors
Wylie Stateman
Gregg Baxter
Dialogue Editors
Richard Dwan Jnr
Patrick Foley
Dave Williams
Chris Hogan
ADR Editors
Bill Voigtlander
Chris Jargo
Craig A. Dellinger
Michelle Perrone
Mary Ruth Smith
Foley Editors
Craig Jaeger
Bob Beher
Pamela Yuen
Willy Allen
Sound Mixer
Lee Orloff
Scoring Mixer
Tim Boyle
Dolby stereo consultant:
Douglas Greenfield
Re-recording Mixers
Mike Minkler
Robert Beemer
Sound Effects Editors
Scott Martin Gershin
Peter Michael Sullivan
Randy Kelly
Jay B. Richardson
David Kneupper
Dino Dimuro
Mark A. Lanza
Peter J. Lehman
Brian McPherson
Michael Cook
Christopher Assells
Clayton Collins
Dan Hegeman
Foley Artists
Gary "Wrecker" Hecker
John Cucci
Dan O'Connell
Jim Ashwill
Nerses Gezalyan
Technical Adviser
Lieutenant Colonel Jerry Broeckert
Stunt Co-ordinator
Joel Kramer
Weapons Master
Harry Lu
Dog Trainers
Scott Hart
Scott Rowe
Nancy Withrow
Nurissa Pultzier
Supervising Horse Wrangler
James Halty
Horse Wrangler
Erica Richards
Animal Effects
Make-up and Effects Laboratories
Horse/Dog Puppeteers
Douglas J. White
John R. Fifer
Alan A. Apone
Paul Elliott
Mark Maitre

Cast
Arnold Schwarzenegger
Harry Tasker
Jamie Lee Curtis
Helen Tasker
Tom Arnold
Gib
Bill Paxton
Simon
Tia Carrere
Juno
Art Malik
Aziz
Eliza Dushku
Dana
Grant Heslov
Faisil
Marshall Manesh
Khaled
James Allen
Colonel
Dieter Rauter
Boathouse Guard
Jane Morris
Janice
Katsy Chappell
Allison
Crystina Wyler
Charlene
Ofer Samra
Yusif
Paul Barselou
Old Guy in Bathroom
Chuck Tamburro
Helicopter Pilot
Jean-Claude Parachini
Jean-Claude
Uzi Gal
Lead Terrorist
Majed Ibrahim
High-Rise Terrorist
Armen Ksajikian
Juno's Chauffeur
Mike Akrawi
Jihad Cameraman
Mike Cameron
Citation Pilot
Charles Cragin
Samir
Louai Mardini
Gino Salvano
Bread Van Terrorists
Sergeant Scott Dotson
Harrier Pilot
Tom Isbell
Reporter at High-Rise
John Bruno
Custodian

12,600 feet (35mm)/ 15,680 (70mm)
141 minutes

Dolby stereo
In colour
CFI
Anamorphic

Harry Tasker is a top operative for a secret paramilitary agency called Omega Sector. He is investigating a group of Arab terrorists engaged in smuggling nuclear weapons out of the former Soviet Union. His wife Helen, a legal secretary, thinks he is a humble computer sales representative. While Harry chases terrorists around Washington DC and dances the tango with Juno, an art dealer involved with the terrorists, Helen feels neglected and begins a flirtation with a used car salesman named Simon, who pretends that he is a spy to seduce her. After discovering Simon and Helen's relationship, Harry, with the help of his partner Gib, uses all the resources available to him to spy on his wife and eventually humiliate Simon. By blackmailing Helen, he lures her to a hotel room and, posing as a mysterious Frenchman, coerces her into dancing seductively while he sits hidden by shadows in a corner. This romantic scene is interrupted by the invasion of the terrorists who kidnap them both and whisk them off to a tropical island in the Caribbean.

At the terrorists' base, Harry is forced to reveal his true profession to Helen. The terrorists attempt to tor- ▶



Bonds of marriage: Arnold Schwarzenegger, Jamie Lee Curtis

◀ ture him, but he manages to free both himself and Helen. A shootout ensues, and in the melee, Helen is captured and Harry escapes, though Helen thinks he has been killed. Gib rescues Harry from the island and they go in pursuit of Helen and the terrorists. They succeed in saving Helen only to learn that Helen and Harry's teenage daughter, Dana, has been kidnapped by the terrorists, who are threatening to detonate a nuclear warhead in Miami. Harry hijacks a Harrier Jumpjet, rushes to Miami, saves Dana (who has managed to disarm the nuclear warhead), and wipes out the terrorists with one fortuitously aimed missile. One year later, Harry and Helen are working together for Omega Sector.

The central conceit of *True Lies* is its conflation of two antipathetic genres – the action-adventure film and the screwball marriage farce. The first is easily enough accomplished, given a mass of heavy plant, explosions and special effects. The second requires a lighter touch, a witty script and actors with sure comic timing. Each kind of film has a different narrative density, and sadly for the makers of *True Lies*, no one figured out how to emulsify the constituent elements. Instead, despite the efforts of its contrived script, the film keeps separating out like a salad dressing without any mustard.

The far more effective part is the adventure scenario, in which Arnie leaps into heroic action with his usual Teutonic panache. Rumour had it that he would be doing more 'serious acting' in this film, but he hardly seems to be stretching himself. For the most part, his role consists of providing close-ups and dialogue shots to cut in between footage of his stunt doubles. Squiring them around the sets and ladling in the effects that are his trademark, director James Cameron is in his element engineering this sort of stuff.

He's far less assured when dealing with 'feminine' story elements, despite the fact that the *Terminator* films, along with the *Alien* films, are often cited by feminists as positive landmarks in the development of modern womanhood's image in film. Jamie Lee Curtis' role as Helen is disappointingly thin and facile – though Curtis has enough nuance to maintain a presence, she has little to do apart from undergoing the standard transformation from dowdy wimp to feisty heroine. She only kills people by accidentally dropping her gun, though she does throw a few convincing punches at Bond-girl bombshell-esque Tia Carrere.

Helen's ineptitude is consistent with the demands of the action genre, just as the crudely drawn Arab characters must be shown to be too stupid to remember the batteries for the video camera recording their list of demands. In order for *True Lies* to succeed as romance, there would have to be more parity between the sexes and more humanism than is on display here. Instead, the script is lethally ironic about its one-dimensionality. For example, when a character asks why someone is called 'the sand spider', the self-referential reply is "Because it sounds really scary."

In the end, *True Lies* is neither as good as expected nor as bad as reported. Given its confusion as to whether it is *The Thin Man* revisited or James Bond updated, it muddles through well enough. Most of the $120 million it apparently cost seems to be up on the screen, but it is too routine to fire the imagination beyond the usual pyromaniacal impulses.

Leslie Felperin Sharman

When a Man Loves a Woman

USA 1994

Director: Luis Mandoki

Certificate
15
Distributor
Buena Vista
Production Company
Touchstone Pictures
Executive Producers
Simon Maslow
Ronald Bass
Al Franken
Producers
Jordan Kerner
Jon Avnet
Co-producers
C. Tad Devlin
Susan Merzbach
Associate Producer
Salli Newman
Production Co-ordinators
Nancy Jane King
Mexico:
Inès Jacome
Production Manager
C. Tad Devlin
Mexico Unit Production Manager
Rosalia Salazar
Location Manager
Robin Citrin
2nd Unit Directors
James W. Gavin
Mexico:
Mickey Gilbert
Assistant Directors
Steve Danton
Bruce Carter
Sheryl Blanc
San Francisco:
Annie Spiegelman
Aimee A. Morris
Mexico:
Enrique Arroyo
Marge Piane
Luciana Kaplan
Casting
Amanda Mackey
Cathy Sandrich
Voice:
Barbara Harris
Associate:
Karen Miller
Screenplay
Ronald Bass
Al Franken
Script Supervisor
Cynthia Hyde Upstill
Director of Photography
Lajos Koltai
2nd Unit Director of Photography
Frank Holgate
Wescam Photography
Hans Bjerno
Underwater Photography
Pete Romano
Camera Operator
Michael St. Hilaire
Steadicam Operator
Robert Ulland
Computer Graphics
Michael Fowler
Editor
Garth Craven
Production Designer
Stuart Wurtzel
Art Director
Steven A. Saklad
Set Design
Stan Tropp
Set Decorator
Kara Lindstrom
Set Dresser
Michael P. Sweeney
Special Effects Co-ordinator
Thomas R. Ward
Costume Design
Linda Bass
Wardrobe Supervisor
Diane Crooke
Make-up Artists
Leonard Engelman
Rick Sharp
Hairstylists
Colleen Callaghan
K. G. Ramsey
Title Design
R/Greenberg Associates West
Titles/Opticals
Buena Vista Imaging
Music
Zbigniew Preisner
Additional:
Don Davis
Music Performed by
The Sinfonia Varsovia
Music Conductor
Wojciech Michniewski
Orchestrations
Don Davis
Supervising Music Editor
Roy Prendergast
Songs/Music Extracts
"When a Man Loves a Woman" by Calvin Lewis, Andrew Wright, performed by Percy Sledge; "My Funny Valentine" by Richard Rodgers, Lorenz Hart; "Crazy Love" by Van Morrison, performed by Brian Kennedy; "I'm a Good Man" by Robert Cray, Dennis Walker, performed by Robert Cray; "Mike & Alice's Restaurant" by Don Davis; "El Gusto (Son Huasteco)" by Elpidio Ramirez, performed by Los Lobos; "Running From Mercy" by Rickie Lee Jones, Leo Kottke, "Stewart's Coat", by Rickie Lee Jones, performed by Rickie Lee Jones; "Everybody Hurts" by William Berry, Michael Stipe, Peter Buck, Mike Mills, performed by R.E.M.
Choreography
Miranda Garrison
Supervising Sound Editor
George Watters II
Sound Editors
F. Hudson Miller
R. J. Palmer
Midge Costin
Gary Wright
Teri Dorman
Karen Spangenberg
ADR Supervisor
Juno J. Ellis
ADR Editors
Denise Horta
Beth Bergeron
Foley Editors
Victoria Martin
James Likowski
Fred Burke
Sound Mixers
Thomas D. Causey
Music:
Rafal Paczkowski
John Richards
ADR Mixer
Robert Deschaine
Foley Mixer
David Gertz
Sound Re-recording Mixers
Rick Ash
Dean A. Zupancic
John Reitz
Dave Campbell
Gregg Rudloff
Sound Effects
John Fasal
Foley Walkers
James Moriana
Jeffrey Wilhoit
Technical Adviser
Vincent Mata
Stunt Co-ordinator
Mickey Gilbert
Marine Co-ordinator
Jeff Johnson
Diving Co-ordinator
Juan Barnard

Cast
Andy Garcia
Michael Green
Meg Ryan
Alice Green
Ellen Burstyn
Emily
Tina Majorino
Jess Green
Mae Whitman
Casey Green
Lauren Tom
Amy
Philip Seymour Hoffman
Gary
Eugene Roche
Walter
Gail Strickland
Pam
Steven Brill
Madras Tie Guy
Susanna Thompson
Janet
Erinn Canavan
Shannon
Latanya Richardson
Dr Gina Mendez
Bari K. Willerford
Malcolm
James Jude Courtney
Earl
Jacques de Groot
Guy in the Back
Anne Ohliger
Jess, aged 4
Tony Montero
Bartender
Cynthia Mace
Detox Nurse
Jennie Yee
Vu
William Frankfather
AA Leader
Angelina Fiordellisi
Joanna
Ellen Geer
Liz Lang
Amy Treese
Brandis Kemp
Judith Friend
Deana Koprynski
AA Women
Syd Field
Peer Ebbighausen
Patients
Ronald Bass
Joe Drago
Andrew Magarian
AA Men

11,287 feet
125 minutes

Dolby stereo
In colour
Prints by
Technicolor

Michael and Alice Green are a happily married middle-class couple with two young children and a spacious house in San Francisco. But Alice's drinking problem, hitherto a secret, reaches critical proportions when, while Michael is away, she arrives home drunk, hits her daughter and passes out. In a clinic to dry out, Alice must reassess her life. Meanwhile, at home, Michael copes as best he can.

Visiting her at the clinic, Michael feels excluded when he sees Alice with her new friends. When she returns home, she is a different person – sober, critical and irritable. Finding Alice and Gary – a friend from the clinic – talking in the sitting room, Michael storms upstairs. Alice insists there is nothing romantic going on, and asks Michael to see a counsellor with her. The counsellor recommends he attend A.A. meetings for partners of alcoholics. Unable to cope with Alice, he moves out. When their paths cross, Alice tells Michael she would like him to attend her speech at A.A. celebrating six months of sobriety. He says he has been forced to take a job in Denver. They part amicably. After Alice gives her speech, accepting responsibility for her drinking, an apologetic Michael appears.

With sledgehammer subtlety, Luis Mandoki's film explores the effect of alcoholism on the family, and is noteworthy for casting Meg Ryan as an alcoholic – an interesting deviation from her usual flighty wholesomeness. Andy Garcia too is convincing as her manipulative and personable husband. Together, though, Alice and Michael, with no friends, have some questionable tendencies regarding public display. This is apparent from the film's first scene, in which a stranger chats up Alice in a crowded bar, only to be interrupted by Michael, who pretends to make a play for her. Soon Alice, with

everyone watching, is straddling and passionately kissing her husband. In the final scene, the couple, speaking in the third person, parody themselves as observed phenomena. Says Michael to Alice, and to anyone else in earshot, "He tried everything except really listening." This time they kiss in a more wholesome setting.

It is not the acting that makes this film so abysmal, nor the script, which manages to avoid embarrassment at its own pretensions. This is probably due to the expertise of Ronald Bass (*The Joy Luck Club*, *Black Widow*, *Rain Man*) or perhaps the contribution of *Saturday Night Live* satirist Al Franken. The problem lies, rather, with the direction, with its lugubrious atmospherics. Aided by cinematographer Lajos Koltai, director Luis Mandoki, previously responsible for *White Palace* and *Born Yesterday*, has made something that – apart from some unnecessary jump-cuts denoting life-fissures rather than shifts in time or space – is barely distinguishable from an episode of *thirtysomething*. That series, however, would never have wasted the talents of Ellen Burstyn who, as Alice's mother, is on screen for all of two minutes.

Ever since *Ordinary People*, exploiting the dysfunctions of modern middle-class family life has been a lucrative subject, its popularity corresponding to the rise of Reaganism, now repackaged as Clinton-style family values and 'tough love'. With its theme of alcoholism, *When a Man Loves a Woman* also belongs to a genre that includes *Lost Weekend*, *Under the Volcano*, *Barfly* and the work of John Cassavetes, but strives unconvincingly for realism. Nevertheless, the film has some nice touches, the most memorable of them occurring when, early in the morning, the alarm on the neighbour's Porsche goes off: Alice, in her nightgown, grabs some eggs, runs out and throws them at the car. It's a therapeutic moment, a yuppie equivalent of Charles Bronson's crusade against inner-city muggers.

Exploiting its audience and subject matter, Mandoki's film, in an era of homelessness and Aids, amounts to little more than emotional pornography. Yet the production team insists on selling the film with the usual psycho-babble. Says producer Jordan Kerner, "Family in the 90s is really about the taking of responsibility for each other." Bass is more propagandistic, claiming, "After seeing this film, audiences will want to work harder on their marriage and their parenting." So much for those not conforming to type. With family values the last refuge of scoundrels, and the line between nuclear-family love and oppression looking exceedingly thin, Michael tells Alice, "I won't let you leave me, I won't let you leave this family, I won't let you destroy yourself." The film's free-market morality rankles, and it's too bad that Alice doesn't run off with her A.A. friends, particularly the ex-armed robber who Michael assumed to be a child molester. It's yet another film that exploits symptoms rather than causes.

Woody Haut

Where Sleeping Dogs Lie

USA 1991

Director: Charles Finch

Certificate
15
Distributor
Columbia TriStar
Production Company
August Entertainment
Executive Producer
Paul Mason
Producer
Mario Sotela
Co-producer
Charles Finch
Associate Producers
Michael Rothschild
Kimba Hills
Nadia Alsharif
Production Co-ordinator
Thomas D. Adelman
Production Manager
Avraham Kleinberger
Location Manager
Edward T. Parmelee
Post-production Supervisor
Pamela Reis
Assistant Directors
Bruce Franklin
Andrew C. Keeter
Casting
Kimba Hills
Screenplay
Charles Finch
Yolande Turner
Script Supervisor
Halima Fielding
Director of Photography
Miles Cooke
Camera Operator
Monty Rowan
Editors
B.J. Sears
Gene M. Gamache
Associate Editor
John Watson
Production Designer
Eve Cauley
Art Director
Lisa Snyder
Set Design
Lisa Keller
Set Decorator
Anthony Stabley
Set Dressers
Ondi McMaster
Peter Gum
Dominique Cady
Scenic Artist
Brian Spears
Special Effects Co-ordinator
Roscoe Fowler
Costume Design
Lynn Pickwell
Wardrobe Supervisor
Catherine Weaver
Key Make-up and Hair
Tricia Sawyer
Special Make-up Effects
R. Christopher Biggs
Hairstylist
Gwyne Redner
Titles/Opticals
C.F.I/E.F.X

Music
Hans Zimmer
Mark Mancina
Music Producer
Jay Rifkin
Music Editor
Michael Wetherwax
Supervising Sound Editor
Patrick M. Griffith
Production Sound Mixer
Virgil Cleminitine
ADR Editor
Chris Reeves
Sound Re-recordists
Gerry Lentz
Stanley Johnston
Derrick C. Perkins
Sound Transfers
Third Street Sound
Foley Recording
Brad Blake
Paul Aronoff
Foley Artists
Dean Minnerly
Rob Muchnicki
ADR Editor
Chris Reeves
ADR Recording
John Reiner
Technical Co-ordinator
William B. Johnston
Stunt Co-ordinator
Clay Boss
Animal Trainer
Jim Brockett

Cast
Dylan McDermott
Bruce Simmons
Tom Sizemore
Eddie Hale
Sharon Stone
Serena Black
Charles Finch
Evan Best
Ron Karabatsos
Stan Reeb
Mary Woronov
Woman Tourist
David Q. Combs
Man Tourist
Vanna Bonta
Liza Whitcraft
Serena's Secretaries
Phoebe Stone
Little Girl
Shawne Rowe
Telegram Clown
Richard Zavaglia
Detective Clifton
Jillian McWhirter
Dol Whitney
Brett Cullen
John Whitney

8,192 feet
91 minutes

Dolby stereo
In colour

Los Angeles. Bruce Simmons is an unsuccessful estate agent and screenwriter. Kicked out of his apartment, he moves into the Davenport house, an empty mansion he has been asked to sell. He visits his agent and ex-lover Serena, who tells him to write something commercial. Back in the house, he is surprised by two tourists, who tell him it was the site of a family's slaughter, by a killer who was never caught. Bruce resolves to write a book about the killings, and allows Serena to believe that his source is the murderer. As Bruce begins to research, he agrees to let a room to Eddie Hale, who claims to be a supermarket manager. When Bruce discovers that Eddie read his work while he was asleep, he flies into a rage. Later he apologises, and the men begin to talk. Eddie suggests that murderers are people unable to deal with failure. Visiting Serena, Bruce admits he doesn't know the murderer. Serena tells him to lie. Eddie offers to help Bruce with his work, saying he has psychiatric knowledge.

Returning to the house the next night, Bruce finds Eddie has made him a birthday cake. Bruce shows him a picture of his sister, and Eddie says his family were killed in a car crash. The next day, Eddie sees a family playing. In his room, he ties himself up, and dreams of a burning house.

Unable to wake Eddie the next morning, Bruce calls the supermarket, and finds he doesn't work there. When Eddie leaves, Bruce plays a tape left in Eddie's Walkman, and hears Eddie talk while a family scream. When Eddie returns, Bruce accuses him of the Davenport murders. Eddie tells him he is right, but convinces Bruce that the two of them are alike, and that Bruce needs him for his book. Bruce quickly grows sick of Eddie's presence and calls the police, who tell him he is the victim of a hoax. But Eddie has left a tape saying he plans to visit Bruce's sister. Bruce finds his sister's family intact, but is given another tape from Eddie, who brags that he will kill again.

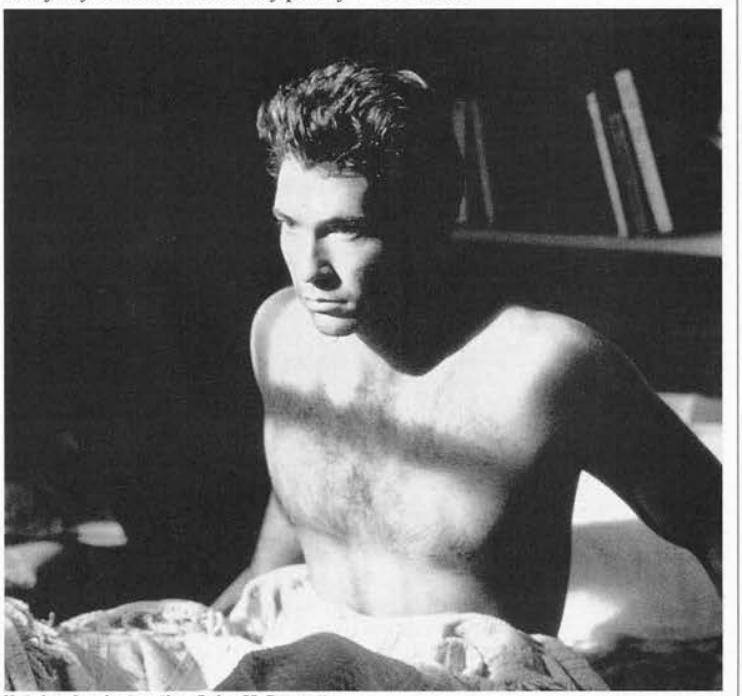
Opportunistically released the same week as the genuine Sharon Stone film *Intersection*, this is, in true video back-catalogue tradition, a three-year-old thriller in which she features hardly at all. All it offers seekers of pre-*Basic Instinct* Stone is an establishing shot of her ass poking out of a car, a few good lines ("write something that grabs me between the legs"), and a shaky dry run at the mix of icy parody and frigid come-on with which she finally kissed starletdom goodbye. Beyond that, she's just another of the disposable female agents that screenwriters currently seem so fond of.

Much of the real interest in *Where Sleeping Dogs Lie* also comes from such scribblers' pathology. From its opening shot of Bruce having a pitch rejected, through the Ibsen quote on writing-as-pain hilariously pasted on the screen straight afterwards, to the incongruous sight of Dylan McDermott imagining a film about Mickey Rourke's undeserved employment, this is clearly the work of men whose phones don't ring.

The attempt to fashion a serial killer's *Sunset Boulevard* from such griping, as Bruce embraces a madman in the search for success, is sunk because the writers, both on-screen and real, are so average. Bruce's agony at compromising his muse is hard to share when, presented with the actual subject of his book on murderers, he declares he would rather die than gain insight into his actions. His refusal to sleep with Stone due to creative angst is just so much wishful thinking, and McDermott's adequate performance only heightens the sense of pretension.

Only Tom Sizemore's Eddie rises beyond his writers' neuroses. He makes a top-drawer twitcher, reminiscent of John Sessions in residence at the Bates Motel, and all the film's scraps of weirdness attach to him. Pronouncing Biblical quotes and employment lies (Eddie claims to wipe spit from gamblers' lucky chips) as if every word came from the dead zone, Sizemore deserves better. Combined with a pervasive sense of grubbiness and existential meandering as the budget-enforced lonely-house setting does its work, and an ending which leaves psychosis unpunished, he makes one almost pleased at the perversity of this theatrical release. But paying to see it would be crazy.

Nick Hasted



Not sleeping, just resting: Dylan McDermott

Wolf

USA 1994

Director: Mike Nichols

Certificate
15
Distributor
Columbia TriStar
Production Company
Columbia Pictures Industries
Executive Producers
Neil Machlis
Robert Greenhut
Producer
Douglas Wick
Associate Producers
Jim Harrison
Michele Imperato
Production Co-ordinator
Nan Morales
New York Production Office Co-ordinator
Jane Raab
Unit Production Managers
Neil Machlis
New York:
Dana Robin
Location Managers
Lisa Blok-Linson
New York:
Megan Monaghan
Assistant Directors
Michael Haley
Mark Cotone
Laura Nesbit
New York:
Richard Patrick
Casting
Juliet Taylor
Screenplay
Jim Harrison
Wesley Strick
Script Supervisor
Mary Baily
Director of Photography
Giuseppe Rotunno
Camera Operator
Giovanni Fiore Coltellacci
Steadicam Operator
Garrett Brown
Animatronic Wolf Effects Created By
Tom Woodruff Jnr
Alec Gillis
Art Crew:
Gino Acevedo
Linda Frobos
Norman Cabrera
Cathy McDonald
Karin Hanson
Jeff Farley
Kevin McTurk
Yuri Everson
Lisa Rocco
Lennie McDonald
John Teska
Andy Schoenberg
Steve Frakes
Desiree Scott
Mechanical Crew:
Dave Kindlon
Jeff Edwards
Jon Dawe
Bud McGrew
Editor
Sam O'Steen
Production Designer
Bo Welch
Art Directors
Tom Duffield
New York:
Tom Warren
Set Design
Jacques Valin
Sean Haworth
Set Decorators
Linda DeScenna
New York:
Susan Bode
New York Scenic Artist
James Sorice
Storyboard Artists
Michael Anthony Jackson
David Lowery
Special Effects Co-ordinator
Stan Parks
Special Effects
Daniel A. Sudick

Costume Design
Ann Roth
Costume Supervisors
Cheryl Beasley
Blackwell
Bruce Ericksen
Make-up
Stephen Abrums
Ronnie Specter
Greg Nelson
New York:
Robert Laden
Special Make-up Effects
Rick Baker
Hairstylists
Marlene D. Williams
Steven Frank
New York:
Romaine Greene
Music/Music Conductor/Orchestrations
Ennio Morricone
Music Editor
Suzana Peric
Music Consultant
Jeffrey Pollack
Supervising Sound Editor
Stan Bochner
Production Mixer
Arthur Rochester
New York Sound Mixer
Danny Michael
Re-recording Mixer
Lee Dichter
Stunt Co-ordinator
M. James Arnett

Cast
Jack Nicholson
Will Randall
Michelle Pfeiffer
Laura Alden
James Spader
Stewart Swinton
Kate Nelligan
Charlotte Randall
Richard Jenkins
Detective Bridger
Christopher Plummer
Raymond Alden
Eileen Atkins
Mary
David Hyde Pierce
Roy
Om Puri
Dr Vijay Alezias
Ron Rifkin
Doctor
Prunella Scales
Maude
Brian Markinson
Detective Wade
Shirin Devrim
Older Woman
Peter Gerety
George
Bradford English
Keyes
Kirby Mitchell
Younger Man
Madhur Jaffrey
Editress
William Hill
Preppie
Cynthia O'Neal
Dance Woman
Eva Rodriguez
Maid
Allison Janney
Young Business Person
Tom Oppenheim
Young Butler
Starletta Dupois
Victim's Mother
Thomas F. Duffy
Tom
Star Jasper
Erik Anderson
Michelle Hurd
Hookers
John Hackett
Cop in Central Park
Stewart J. Zully
Gary
Marvin Chatinover
Howard Erskine
Garrison Lane
Tycoons
Irene Forrest
Gloria
Timothy Thomas
Intellectual Man
Joanna Sanchez
Receptionist
Kaity Tong
TV Newscaster
Jose Soto
Van Baily
Boys
Lisa Emery
Intellectual Woman
Lia Chang
Desk Clerk
James Saito
Servant
Osgood Perkins
Cop
Leigh Carlson
Alice Liu
Max Weitzenhoffer
Party Guests
Dwayne McClary
Gang Member
Michael Raynor
Pigeon Man
Jennifer Nicholson
Young Publishing Executive
Arthur Rochester
Man by Elevator
Jack Nesbit
Man in Conference Room
Dale Kasman
Jeffrey Allen O'Den
Office Workers
Neil Machlis
Sleazy Lawyer
Kenneth Ebling
Ticket Taker

11,266 feet
125 minutes

Dolby stereo
In colour
Technicolor

Driving at night through Vermont, Will Randall hits a wolf and apparently kills it. But when he approaches the animal, it revives and bites him before vanishing into the woods. The next day, at the MacLeish publishing house in New York, where Will works as editor-in-chief, the talk is of the party being given that evening by Raymond Alden, a tycoon who recently acquired MacLeish. Will fears he's about to be sacked; his assistant Roy, his secretary Mary and his protegé, head of marketing Stewart Swinton, assure him of their loyalty.

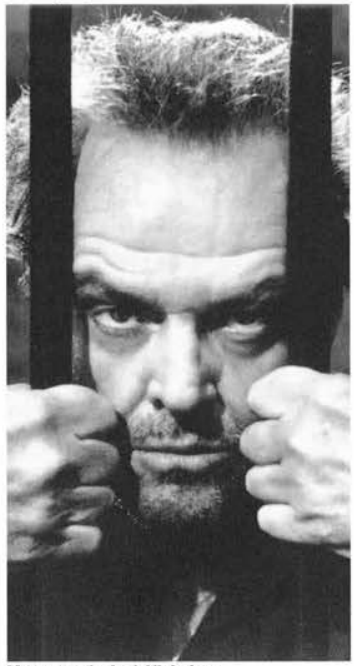
With his wife Charlotte, Will attends the party on Alden's estate. Alden offers him a demeaning post with less money, adding that Stewart has been pushing for Will's job. Shaken and feeling suddenly ill, Will is helped by Alden's daughter Laura. The next day he sleeps round the clock and when Charlotte comes home makes passionate love to her. At work he finds his senses intensely heightened, and after Charlotte leaves – supposedly – for a seminar, detects a strange smell on her clothes. Going to Stewart's apartment, he confronts her there, and bites Stewart's hand.

Will moves into a hotel. With Roy and Mary's help he plans to go independent and entice MacLeish's top authors away. Visiting Alden's estate to turn down his offer he meets Laura again, and they spend the afternoon together. At sundown he feels strange, and Laura gives him a bed in her summer-house. That night he hunts and kills a deer in the woods, waking covered in blood but with no memory of what happened. After giving Alden his ultimatum, Will consults an expert on animal possession, Dr Alezias, who tells him he may be turning into a wolf and gives him an amulet to prevent the process. At night Will roams through Central Park Zoo, savaging three muggers who attack him.

Reinstated in his job, with increased power and salary, Will humiliates and fires Stewart. Charlotte comes to his hotel, but he rejects her and spends the night with Laura. In the morning the police arrive: Charlotte is dead, her throat torn out. Laura gives him an alibi but conceals him on the Alden estate, locking him in the stables before returning to make a statement. At the precinct she meets Stewart and realises he too is becoming a wolf. She flees back to the estate where Will, thanks to the amulet, has subdued his wolfish tendencies. Stewart pursues her, kills two guards and attacks her. Will hurls away the amulet and bounds to the rescue; after a violent fight Laura shoots Stewart dead. Will escapes into the woods, and all the killings are ascribed to Stewart. Laura, a lupine gleam in her eyes, lopes off to meet the wolf Will has become.

Of all the screen monsters, the werewolf has always had the strongest claim on our sympathy. Few movie lycanthropes get that way because they deserve to, let alone want to, and the very first *Wolf Man* film (1940) roped in mystic old Maria Ouspenskaya to warn Lon Chaney Jr that virtue was no protection: "Even the man who is pure of heart/And says his prayers by night/May become a wolf when the wolfbane blooms....". Nearly always the victims are racked with remorse over their nocturnal carnage; more recently, thanks to advances in special effects, moral anguish has manifested itself in transformation scenes of sinew-wrenching physical agony (*The Company of Wolves*, *An American Werewolf in London*). At the same time, though, a more subversive theme has been emerging: that the feral state might have a lot going for it. Despite all that distressing bloodshed, the werewolf – animal id rampant – is clearly in touch with healthy natural instincts repressed beneath our over-civilised veneers. Maybe werewolves, like blondes, have more fun.

Any day now, someone is going to come up with a film that explores the tension between these rival myths of screen lycanthropy (*The Howling* sniffed round the idea but backed off, being a bit ahead of its time). Mike Nichols' *Wolf* could have been that film, but finally isn't. After a few ritual nods to the agony-and-remorse school, it decisively comes down on the fun side. The pre-wolf Will Randall is a stooped, put-upon figure, sneered at by the predatory new boss for his wimpish virtues of "taste and individuality" and wretchedly confessing to Laura that he doesn't "have the courage to be jobless at my age." One good shot of wolfblood and he sheds 15 years along with his glasses and his moral scruples; he acquires hyper-acute senses, high-octane sexual allure and new-found skills in corporate in-fighting. All this, along with superhuman strength and a knack for 20-foot kung-fu leaps. The trappings may be more sophisticated, but the angle isn't so far from that of the anodyne *Teen Wolf* movies: werewolves are simply cool dudes who can pull the chicks.



Moonstruck: Jack Nicholson

Essentially, *Wolf* is a slick variant on the old wish-fulfilment formula of the worm that turns, and not least of its pleasures is Nicholson playing the worm. True, his meek act doesn't convince for a second – the Nicholson screen persona has expanded quite some way since *The King of Marvin Gardens* – but then it's not meant to. The fun is waiting for the moment when the eyes glint, the teeth are bared, and Wolfman Jack makes his welcome entrance. Almost more enjoyable, because less predictable, is watching smooth arch-yuppie James Spader go wolf. (Not that anybody does go wolf in full-splatter *American Werewolf* style, since *Wolf* isn't that visceral a film. Metamorphosis is achieved by extra facial hair, plus a lot of snarling, nose-wrinkling and jaw-jutting.) At one point the two dominant males clash in – where else? – the executive toilet, with Will not only sacking Stewart but literally pissing on him ("Just marking my territory").

Never quite getting its conventions in focus, *Wolf* plays mix-and-match with werewolf lore from a dozen sources. Gazing at night from his hotel window, supersenses alert, Will picks up a whole alternative frequency of jungle cries that evoke Michael Wadleigh's under-rated *Wolfen*: the idea of a prowling feral subculture infesting the New York streets. At other times the film resorts to some hoary old routines from way back: the zoo creatures gibbering and howling as the wolfman prowls among them, the ill starred muggers picking what looks like an easy hit. The ending is a mess, gabbled through at speed in the hope we won't notice: the police, it seems, happily believe that a man with six bullets in him tore someone's throat out (or maybe that a man with his throat torn out fired off six bullets). But *Wolf*'s chief failing is the complacent, accept-your-true-nature attitude it shares with Nichols' last film, *Regarding Henry*. Indeed the two films are mirror images: Henry is a ruthless hot shot until an accident turns him gentle and caring, Will takes the opposite journey. In both cases the final message is one of reassurance. And reassurance isn't what any worthwhile werewolf movie should be about.

Philip Kemp

Wyatt Earp

USA 1994

Director: Lawrence Kasdan

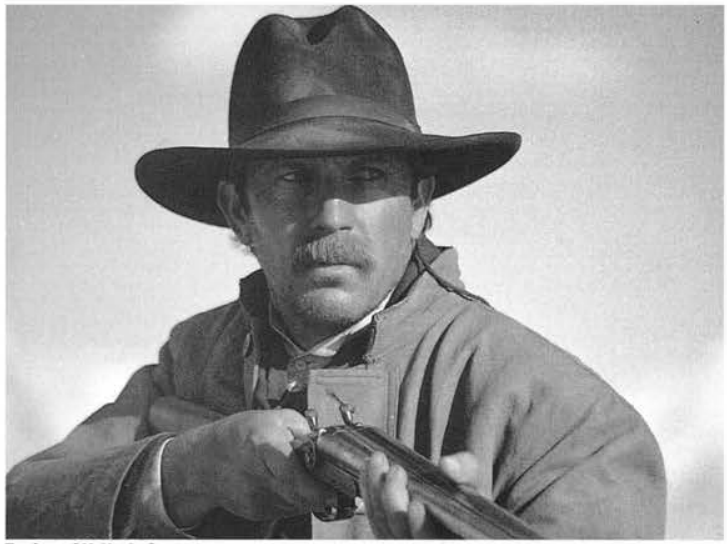
Certificate
12
Distributor
Warner Bros
Production Companies
Tig Productions/
Kasdan Pictures
In association with
Paragon Entertainment
Corporation
For Warner Bros
Executive Producers
Jon Slan
Dan Gordon
Charles Okun
Michael Grillo
Producers
Jim Wilson
Kevin Costner
Lawrence Kasdan
Production Supervisors
Danis Regal
2nd Unit:
Sara Spring
2nd Unit
Production Manager
Steph Benseman
Unit Production Managers
Charles Okun
Michael Grillo
Location Manager
Paul Hargrave
Assistant Directors
Stephen Dunn
Jeff Rafner
Peter Hirsch
L. David Silva
Christina J. Stauffer
Casting
Jennifer Shull
Associates:
Elizabeth Shull
Phil Poulos
Screenplay
Dan Gordon
Lawrence Kasdan
Script Supervisor
Anne Rapp
Director of Photography
Owen Roizman
2nd Unit Director
of Photography
Richard Bowen
Time Lapse Photography
Ulli Bonnekamp
Camera Operators
Bill Roe
Ian Fox
Steadicam Operator
Rusty Geller
Video Documentarians
Christopher Sliney
Kyle DeViendt
Kent Kubena
Special Moon Effect
Dream Quest Images
Opticals
Pacific Title
Matte Paintings
Mark Sullivan
Editor
Carol Littleton
Production Designer
Ida Random
Art Director
Gary Wissner
Set Design
Charles Daboub Jnr
Tom Reta
Barry Chusid
Set Decorator
Cheryl Carasik
Storyboard Artist
David J. Negron Jnr
Special Effects
Burt Dalton
Joe Heffernan
Dick Hogle
Sol Rivera
Aerial Pyrotechnics
Western Enterprises
Costume Design
Colleen Atwood
Costume Supervisors
Cha Blevins
Le Dawson

Make-up
Michael Mills
F.X. Perez
Gerry Quist
Bonita DeHaven
Hair
Marlene Williams
Elle Elliott
Dorothy Fox
Sharon Mcvey
Title Design
Pittard-Sullivan-
Fitzgerald
Music
James Newton Howard
Music Conductor
Marty Paich
Orchestrations
James Newton Howard
Brad Dechter
Chris Boardman
Music Co-producer
Michael Mason
Music Editor
Jim Weidman
Music Extract
"HMS Pinafore"
by Gilbert and
Sullivan, performed
by Albuquerque Civic
Light Opera
Association
Supervising Sound Editors
Robert Grieve
Stu Bernstein
Dialogue:
Bobby Mackston
Sound Editors
Steve Mann
Frank T. Smathers
David Arnold
Michael Dressel
Daniel Yale
J. H. Arrufat
Dialogue:
Alison Fisher
James Matheny
Lewis Goldstein
ADR Supervisor
Jessica Gallavan
Foley Supervisor
John Murray
ADR Editors
Joe Dorn
Stephen Janisz
Foley
Dan O'Connell
Production Sound Mixer
John Pritchett
Foley Mixer
Jim Ashwill
Foley Recordist
Nerses Gezalyan
Music Mixer/Recordist
Shawn Murphy
Sound Re-recording Mixers
Kevin O'Connell
Rick Kline
Sound Re-recording
Daniel Sharp
John W. Brilhante
Sound Effects
Ken J. Johnson
Stunt Co-ordinator
Norman Howell
Gun Expert
Branko Wohlfahrt

Cast
Kevin Costner
Wyatt Earp
Dennis Quaid
Doc Holliday
Gene Hackman
Nicholas Earp
David Andrews
James Earp
Linden Ashby
Morgan Earp
Jeff Fahey
Ike Clanton
Joanna Going
Josie Marcus
Mark Harmon
Johnny Behan
Michael Madsen
Virgil Earp
Catherine O'Hara
Allie Earp
Bill Pullman
Ed Masterson
Isabella Rossellini
Big Nose Kate
Tom Sizemore
Bat Masterson
JoBeth Williams
Bessie Earp
Mare Winningham
Mattie Blaylock
James Gammon
Mr Sutherland
Rex Linn
Frank McLaury
Randle Mell
John Clum
Adam Baldwin
Tom McLaury
Annabeth Gish
Urilla Sutherland
Lewis Smith
Curly Bill Brocius
Ian Bohen
Young Wyatt
Betty Buckley
Virginia Earp
Alison Elliott
Lou Earp
Todd Allen
Sherm McMasters
Mackenzie Astin
Young Man on Boat
James Caviezel
Warren Earp
Karen Grassle
Mrs Sutherland
John Denis Johnston
Frank Stillwell
Tea Leoni
Sally
Martin Kove
Ed Ross
Jack Kehler
Bob Hatch
Kirk Fox
Pete Spence
Norman Howell
Johnny Ringo
Boots Southerland
Marshall White
Scotty Augare
Indian Charlie
Gabriel Folse
Billy Clanton
Kris Kamm
Billy Claiborne
John Lawlor
Judge Spicer
Monty Stuart
Dutch Wiley
Hugh Ross
Erwin Sutherland
Gregory Avellone
Traveller
Michael McGrady
John Shanssey
Mary Jo Niedzielski
Martha Earp
Scott Paul
Young Morgan
Oliver Hendrickson
Young Warren
Darwin Mitchell
Tom Chapman
Steve Kniesel
Bullwacker
Larry Sims
Dirty Sodbuster
Greg Goossen
Bullwacker's Friend
Heath Kizzier
Red
Clark Sanchez
Mike Donovan
Ed Beimfohr
Faro Dealer
Giorgio E. Tripoli
Judge Earp
Ben Zeller
Dr Seger
Rockne Tarkington
Stable Hand
Scott Rasmussen
Minister
Ellen Blake
Paris
Steph Benseman
Pine Bluff Sheriff
Bob "Dutch" Holland
Tubercular Inmate
Steve Cormier
Tent Saloon Bartender
Matt Langseth
Link Borland
David Doty
Mayor Wilson
Steven G. Tyler
Deputy Ford
Billy Streater
Marshall Meagher
David L. Stone
Larry Deger
Jake Walker
Mannen Clements
Matt O'Toole
Gyp Clements
Geo Cook
Big Cowboy
Dillinger Steele
Steve Lindsay
Drunk Cowboys
Dick Beach
Wagner
Benny Manning
Walker
Kathleen O'Hara
Hotel Resident
Nicholas Benseman
Delivery Boy
Sarge McGraw
Deputy Black
Steven Hartley
Spangenberg
Brett Cullen
Saddle Tramp
Marlene Williams
Saloon Dealer
Paul Ukena
Bar Regular
Owen Roizman
Danny
Karen Schwartz
Marshall White's Wife
Glen Burns
Bar Patron
John Furlong
Clem Hafford
Zack McGillis
Rancher
Adam Taylor
Texas Jack
Rusty Hendrickson
Turkey Creek Jack
Hanley Smith
Billiard Parlour Patron
Jon Kasdan
Bar Boy
Dale West
Station Master
Michael Huddleston
Albert
Al Trujillo
Camp Foreman
John Doe
Tommy Behind-the-
Deuce
Matt Beck
McGee
Gary Dueer
Dick Gird

17,134 feet
190 minutes

Dolby stereo
In colour
Technicolor
Anamorphic



Far from OK: Kevin Costner

Lamarr, Missouri. During the Civil War, young Wyatt Earp tries to run away and join his elder brothers James and Virgil in the Union army, but is stopped by his father Nicholas. After Virgil and James return, the restless Nicholas decides the family should move west to California. A few years later, Wyatt returns to Lamarr to study law with his grandfather, Judge Earp, and marry his sweetheart, Urilla Sutherland. During pregnancy Urilla contracts typhoid and dies. Desolated, Wyatt takes to drink and burns down their house. Nine months later he fetches up in Arkansas begging and stealing, and is jailed for horse-theft. His father bails him out and tells him to leave Arkansas for good. Heading west Wyatt becomes a buffalo-hunter, taking on as skinners the brothers Ed and Bat Masterson, but tires of the job and leaves for Wichita, where James Earp runs a saloon and his wife Bessie works as a hooker.

When Wyatt disarms a drunken gunman the town marshall recruits him as deputy. Wyatt enlists James to help him and summons his brothers Virgil and Morgan, who arrive with their wives Allie and Lou. The Earps' cleaning up of Wichita brings an invitation from Dodge City, where they're joined by the Masterson brothers. But Wyatt's enthusiasm for violent arrests is criticised and he's sacked. In Texas, bounty-hunting for a railroad, he meets the tubercular gambler Doc Holliday. But when news comes that Ed Masterson has been killed in Dodge, Wyatt returns and reimposes order. Doc, who has taken a liking to him, arrives with his mistress, Big Nose Kate.

Wyatt persuades his brothers to move to Tombstone, Arizona, to mine silver. But mining proves unprofitable and the Earps revert to law enforcement, backing Marshall Fred White. By jailing gunmen Frank Stillwell and Pete Spence they earn the enmity of the Clanton-McLaury gang and the resentment of Sheriff Johnny Behan. When Behan's mistress, the Jewish actress Josie Marcus, arrives in town, Wyatt is strongly attracted to her. Mortified, his mistress Mattie Blaylock attempts suicide with laudanum.

The Clantons plan to ambush Wyatt, but the plan misfires and Marshall White is killed instead. As tension rises Doc Holliday offers his support, and he and the Earps meet the Clantons in a showdown near the OK Corral. Several of the gang are killed. Behan arrests Holliday and the Earps, but they are cleared in court. Soon afterwards Frank Stillwell shoots Morgan dead, and Virgil is ambushed and badly wounded. The youngest Earp, Warren, arrives to help escort Morgan's body back to California by train. The Clantons are waiting at Tucson but are outgunned, and Wyatt kills Stillwell. Returning to Tombstone, he hunts down the last members of the gang before leaving with Josie. Seventeen years later, on a boat heading for Alaska, Wyatt is recognised by a young man who thanks him for having once saved his uncle, Tommy O'Rourke, from a lynch mob.

It's one of the great ironies of the Western myth that Wyatt Earp, a small-time gambler whose law enforcement activities were minimal and ethically suspect, should have become its most enduringly heroic figure – mainly thanks to his luck in surviving long enough (he died in 1929) to manipulate his own image for posterity. Even posthumously his luck has held. Films such as John Sturges' *Hour of the Gun* and Frank Perry's *Doc* that set out to question the legend have suffered neglect, while the celebratory treatments – Ford's *My Darling Clementine*, Sturges' *Gunfight at the OK Corral* – are remembered. Kasdan, well aware of these contradictory readings, offers an account that veers between celebration and scepticism before settling for moral ambiguity only to tip over, in an awkwardly tacked-on coda, into something dangerously close to acclamation.

At three and a quarter hours, *Wyatt Earp* is nearly as long as *Clementine* and *Gunfight* together, allowing Kasdan to cover far more territory than either Ford or Sturges dreamed of: nearly 40 years of Earp's life and a swathe of frontier America from Missouri to California. Yet though Owen Roizman's photography gives us all the sweeping landscapes and visual splendour we expect from the genre, the final effect is oddly claustrophobic. The key conflicts take place within Earp's psyche, and within the close-knit circle of his family. The group loyalty of kinship is what motivates him, rather than abstract notions of civilisation (as with Ford) or justice (Sturges). "Nothing ▶

◀ counts so much as blood," Gene Hackman's patriarch instructs his sons. "The rest are just strangers."

The scene suffers from being pointedly intended to "explain" Earp, and the same goes for several other episodes: the death of his wife, and the moment when, having disarmed his first gunfighter, he stands raptly holding the gun at arm's length, while James Howard's score soars lyrically and the sky explodes in fireworks. The fireworks, way over the top, are a giveaway; this is a would-be epiphany that's far too self-conscious to carry weight. In a looser-limbed, more self-mocking western (Kasdan's own *Silverado*, for one) the scene could play as parody, but Wyatt Earp is too mindful of its own epic pretensions to send itself up.

Humour, even of the traditional laconic kind, is in short supply. Barring some heavy-handed joshing over Bat Masterson's name, the only light note is struck by Dennis Quaid's goateed Doc Holliday – in any case a relatively subdued figure by comparison with Victor Mature or Kirk Douglas. And if the omission isn't necessarily crippling in a Western (after all, there aren't too many laughs in *High Noon*) Kasdan's film does seem increasingly weighed down by its own seriousness. In this it takes its cue from Costner, who most of the time plays Earp with an impassivity that suggests he might be auditioning for Mount Rushmore.

Big set-piece action sequences don't figure much, either. The climactic gunfight, far from the choreographed elegance of Sturges' version, is reduced to a squalid little close-quarters shootout in a side-street (which, to be fair, is probably about how it was). The rationale for this massive movie can only be the elucidation of Earp himself, since in character terms no-one else really features; yet even after three hours, he remains a curiously unfocused figure. There's little sense in Costner's stolid performance of the charisma that could impel his brothers, older and younger alike, to follow him blindly into one half-baked scheme after another.

Pro or con, all Wyatt Earp movies treat him as a figure of legendary stature, whether for good or evil. (A truly revisionist film would present him as a shabby, mercenary grifter of no importance, and would probably never get made.) Kasdan, clearly uneasy with the legend, can't bring himself to destroy it and ends up endorsing it. In the final showdown Earp walks into point-blank gunfire, unscathed and invulnerable. And at the end of the coda, a cliché flashback (Earp facing down a lynch mob) dragged in for no good dramatic reason, he muses, "Some people say it didn't happen that way." "Never mind them, Wyatt," responds Josie, "it happened that way." The echo of Ford's *Liberty Valance* – "When the legend becomes fact, print the legend" – is unmistakable. But the flatness of the exchange only underlines how far Kasdan has fallen short of his models.

Philip Kemp

Zero Patience

Canada 1993

Director John Greyson

Certificate
18
Distributor
Dangerous To Know
Production Company
Zero Patience Productions Ltd
With the participation of Telefilm Canada/ The Ontario Film Development Corporation
In association with Channel Four TV (UK)
With assistance from Cineplex Odeon Films Canada/Ontario Arts Council/Canada Council/Canadian Film Centre/CRB Foundation
Executive Producer
Alexandra Raffé
Producers
Louise Garfield
Anna Stratton
Associate Producer
Robin Cass
Production Co-ordinator
Marc Green
Production Manager
Arlene Hazzan Green
Location Manager
Andrew Munger
Assistant Directors
Ian Robertson
Sandra Bardocz
Annabelle Wilczur
Casting Director
Dorothy Gardner Montreal:
Lucie Robitaille
Screenplay
John Greyson
Script Supervisor
Rachel Landry
Story Editor
Marni Jackson
Director of Photography
Miroslaw Baszak
2nd Unit Director of Photography
Donna Mobbs
Video Editors
Denis Day
Illa Pine
Additional Video Footage
Dave Smith
Michel Bisson
Alain Fetourneau
Editor
Miume Jan
Production Designer
Sandra Kybartas
Set Decorator
Armando Sgrignuoli
Key Scenic Artist
Charles Mitchell
Butt Puppets
Quantum Leap
Special Effects Editor
Sean Kelly
Costume Design
Joyce Schure
Wardrobe Supervisor
Jason Brown
Make-up Artist
Sylvain Cournoyer
Hairstylist
Reg Quindinho
Title Design
Gary Stuber
Titles/Opticals
Guenter Busch
Music
Glenn Schellenberg
Lyrics:
John Greyson
Glenn Schellenberg
Score:
Glenn Schellenberg
John Switzer
Music Performed by
Bass:
Victor Bateman
Drums:
Al Cross
Guitar/Dobro/ Mandolin:
Cam Macinnes
Percussion:
Matthew Fleming
Clarinet/Soprano Sax/Bombardo:
Peter Klesewater
Fretless Bass:
Steve Lucas
Tenor Sax:
Kirk Macdonald
Keyboards:
Glenn Schellenberg
Bass/Programming:
John Switzer
Guitar:
Jack Trentman
Rhythm Programming:
Darren Bowler
Tony Azzopardi
Tazzdab Productions
Backing Vocals:
Cherie Camp
Neil Donne
Shirley Elkhard
Gwen Swick
Music Producer
John Switzer
Songs/Music Extracts
"Just Like Scheherazade" performed by Normand Fauteux; "Culture of Certainty" performed by John Robinson; "Pop-a-boner" performed by Charles Azulay, David Gale, Howard Rosenstein, Todd Sherman; "Control" performed by Dianne Heatherington, Von Flores, Scott Hurst, Richardo Keens-Douglas, Duncan McIntosh; "The Butthole Duet", "Six or Seven Things" performed by Normand Fauteux, John Robinson; "Positive" performed by Richardo Keens-Douglas, Benjamin Planer, Jeffrey Akomah, Kate Rodrigues, Rae Ellen Hutley; "Contagious" performed by Maria Fukofsky; "HIV's Scheherazade", "Scheherazade (Tell a Story)" performed by Michael Callen; "Zero Patience" performed by Dianne Heatherington, Normand Fauteux, Von Flores, Scott Hurst, Duncan McIntosh, John Robinson
Choreography
Susan McKenzie
Synchronised Swimming Coach
Sandra Inglis
Supervising Sound Editor
Jane Tattersall
Dialogue Editor
Marc Chiasson
ADR Recordist
Jessica Casavant
Foley Recordist
Nick Blagona
Sound Recordist
Urmas John Rosin
Stereo consultants
Daniel W. Victor Jnr
Brian Slack
Re-recording Mixers
Austin Grimaldi
Jessica Casavant
Sound Effects Editor
Sean Kelly
Foley Artist
Sal Grimaldi

Cast
John Robinson
Sir Richard Francis Burton
Normand Fauteux
Zero
Dianne Heatherington
Mary
Richardo Keens-Douglas
George
Bernard Behrens
Doctor Placebo
Charlotte Boisjoli
Zero's Mum
Marla Lukofsky
African Green Monkey
Michael Callen
Miss HIV
Brenda Kamino
Dr Chen
Scott Hurst
Michael
Von Flores
Ray
Duncan McIntosh
Ross
Cassel Miles
Barry
Benjamin Piener
Ted
David Gale
Charles Azulay
Howard Rosenstein
Shower Guys
Peggy Baker
Snake
Bill Coleman
Fox
David Gonzales
Mouse
Yvonne Ng
Parrot
Janice Hladki
Syphylis
Johanna Hladki
Mycoplasma
Louise Garfield
CMV
David Roche
Marni Jackson
Andrew Paterson
Reporters
Lisa Alexander
Phillip Drube
Bill Eadie
Pam Johnson
Charmaine Headley
Myles Pearson
Dan Wild
Erin Woodley
Swimmers
Jeffrey Akomah
Rae Ellen Hutley
Kate Rodrigues
School Kids
Glen Hanson
Marty Rotman
Museum Guards
Ann Medina
Narrator
Benedict Campbell
Newscaster's Voice
Glenn Brown
Colin Campbell
Linda Gardner
Tim McCaskell
TV Anchors
Patrick Cheung
Doug Durand
Andy Fenjo
Todd Sherman
Cargo Ship Sailors
Michael Basler
Karl Beveridge
Debbie Douglas
Andy Fabo
Dorothy Gardner
Rose Gutierrez
Clifton Joseph
Latoux Peoples
Judy Rebick
Lori Spring
Immune System
Sandra Bardocz
Caroline Benjo
Derek Hunter
Andrew Munger
Jeremy Podeswa
Denis Lefebvre
Patricia Rozema
Sherry Tam
Oliver Wittgens
Aids Demonstrators
Pedro Siderato
Bobby 2000
Elmer Bagares
Danny Cockerline
Raymond Glendenning
Anthony Mohamed
Andrew Sorfleet
Doug Stewart
Robert Windrum
Butthole Brigade
Richard Fung
Edward Sheng
Bathhouse Patrons
Glenn Schellenberg
Bathhouse Attendant
Anna Stratton
Ms Strutting
Mark Rourke
Diver

9,036 feet
100 minutes

Ultra stereo
In colour

Richard Burton, the Victorian sexologist and traveller, has miraculously survived into the twentieth century, where he has become a taxidermist in a Natural History Museum. He plans an exhibit on Aids for the museum's Hall of Contagion. Meanwhile Patient Zero, the French Canadian flight attendant and supposed origin of the HIV infection in North America, is brought back from limbo to tell his tale. When Burton decides to make Zero (whom he has not met) the centre piece of his exhibition, twin quests begin. Zero pays invisible visits to his ex-lover George, his physician Dr Cheng, his mother, and Aids activist and former co-worker Mary; while Burton visits the same people and uses his interviews with them to edit a hostile and prejudiced account of Zero's life and death. He also carries out 'research' with a camcorder in a gay bath house.

Finally, Zero and Burton meet for the first time. While Burton can see Zero, his camera cannot pick him up. Musical numbers treat the varied questions of anal sex, mortality, and the African Green Monkey, another spurious origin of Aids. Stripped naked by the monkey in the museum display, the two men finally make love. Analysing Zero's blood the next day, Hunter is turned on to Aids activism by Miss HIV and vows to combat myths about the disease. Unfortunately, he is unable to change the exhibit as he would wish. However, Mary and other ACT UP activists invade the museum and transform it. Finally, Zero decides it is time for him to abandon his ghostly existence on earth and he is taken up away from Burton on to the video screen.

John Greyson's affecting Aids musical begins with a class reciting the story of Scheherazade. Like *The Arabian Nights*, *Zero Patience* will be a story of a narrative and survival (of narrative as survival), in which the ghostly revenant Zero will be granted a temporary reprieve from death just so long as he has a story to tell. That story will bring scintillating visual pleasure with it, from the first number in which some nifty synchronized swimming is combined with sexy callisthenics by Zero, toying with a glitter ball in a fetching one-piece suit. But the question of visibility is typically ironised from the beginning: the wraithlike Zero complains, "How can I get laid if nobody can see me?"; and the equally supernatural Richard Burton aims to put Zero in an HIV multimedia horror show modelled (like *Zero Patience* itself) on a music video aesthetic.

As in Greyson's earlier *Urinal*, then, *Zero Patience* confronts the problem of representing a culture of surveillance without reproducing that culture's



A bigger splash: Gale, Azulay, Rosenstein

coercive and dehumanizing effects; and like *Urinal* once more, it appeals to history (the portraiture of figures such as Burton) and to a shift of emphasis from private, sexual experience to that public policing of images which (in Foucaldian style) sets up dissenting desire as perversion. Much of *Zero Patience* has Burton reiterate the tired clichés and hectoring prejudices of a straight male order: that the historical Zero (a French Canadian gay flight attendant with an enviable sex life) was promiscuous, irresponsible, even a serial killer. Such earnestness, combined with John Robinson's sometimes over-emphatic performance, can prove tiresome. But there are fine moments when surveillance is subverted by sly humour. For example, Burton's attempt to document the sex action in a gay bath house with a camcorder hidden under his towel (Toronto independent film-maker Richard Fung makes a fleeting appearance here) gives rise to a musical lesson on erection etiquette from a male trio in the showers. Greyson's mimetic strategy of parodying oppression works best, as here, when swiftly diverted into humour.

Indeed, the best musical numbers subvert not only Burton's prurient positivism, but also some theoretical sacred cows closer to home for film and queer theorists. Thus a duet of talking arseholes *à la* Cronenberg contend that "the Law of the Father doesn't recognize the hole" and "your rectum ain't a grave" – surely the first time Lacan and Leo Bersani have been set to such a jaunty beat – and a "cofactorial conga" set in an animated dayglo bloodstream offers a user-friendly version of competing theories of infection. And it is to *Zero Patience's* credit that it sets out to question not only the 'culture of certainty' of homophobes and pharmaceutical companies, but also what Greyson sees as the inflexibility of some Aids activists themselves.

Moreover there is a serious, contextualising argument here about the history of epidemiology. Burton's waxwork 'Hall of Contagion' memorialises (or fetishises) Zero's legendary predecessors as founts of contagion, such as Typhoid Mary. And the film achieves a rare resonance when the love scene between Zero and Burton is cross-cut with an animated, elegiac diorama from the same display, in which Dutch sailors, held to be plague bearers, were thrown naked into the sea.

In *Urinal* a tea room queen vindicates his own image captured on a police camera, "reclaiming [in Greyson's words] surveillance in a graceful and surprising way". In the final scene of *Zero Patience*, Zero, now reclaimed himself for queer history as the "slut who inspired safer sex", disappears into a video screen, defiantly smoking a cigarette, laughing and smiling to the lover he is leaving for ever. It is a suitably inspiring image for a film which attempts to combine memory of those we have lost with pride in those we are, a graceful and surprising moment indeed.

Paul Julian Smith

RE-RELEASE

Woodstock: 3 Days of peace and music: The Director's Cut

USA 1994

Director: Michael Wadleigh

Certificate
15
Distributor
Blue Dolphin
Production Company
Warner Bros
A Wadleigh-Maurice Ltd Production
Producer
Bob Maurice
Associate Producer
Dale Bell
Production Managers
Sonya Polonsky
Lewis Teague
Location Unit Supervisor
John Binder
Location Technical Supervisor
Martin Andrews
Assistant Directors
Thelma Schoonmaker
Martin Scorsese
Directors of Photography
Michael Wadleigh
David Myers
Richard Pearce
Don Lenzer
Al Wertheimer
Additional Photography
Ed Lynch
Chuck Levey
Ted Churchill
Fred Underhill
Richard Chew
Bob Danneman
Stan Warnow
Opticals
Cinema Research Corporation
Pacific Title and Arts Studio
National Screen Service
Restoration Optical Effects
Pacific Title
Warner Bros
Imaging Technology
Editors
Thelma Schoonmaker
Martin Scorsese
Stan Warnow
Yeu-Bun Yee
Jerre Huggins
Restoration:
Jerre Huggins
Hubert de la Bouillerie
Steven C. Brown
Titles
Charles Cirigliano
Music Adviser Co-ordinator
Eric Blackstead
Songs/Music Extracts
"Wooden Ships" by David Crosby, Stephen Stills, "Suite: Judy Blue Eyes", by Stephen Stills, "Long Time Gone" by David Crosby, "The Cost of Freedom", performed by Crosby Stills & Nash; "Going Up the Country" by Alan Wilson, "A Change is Gonna Come" performed by Canned Heat; "Freedom" by Richie Havens, "Handsome Johnny" by Richie Havens, Louis Goussett, performed by Richie Havens; "Joe Hill" by Earl Robinson, Alfred Hayes, "Swing Low Sweet Chariot" (traditional) performed by Joan Baez; "Go to the Mirror Boy" by Pete Townshend, "Summertime Blues" by Eddie Cochran, Jerry Capehart, performed by The Who; "At the Hop" by A. Singer, J. Medora, P. White, performed by Sha-Na-Na; "With a Little Help From my Friends" by John Lennon, Paul McCartney, performed by Joe Cocker; "Rock & Soul Music" by Country Joe McDonald, Barry Merton, Chicken Hirsch, Bruce Barthol, David Cohen, "I Feel Like I'm Fixin' to Die Rag" by Country Joe McDonald, performed by Country Joe and the Fish; "Coming into Los Angeles" by and performed by Arlo Guthrie; "I'm Going Home" by Alvin Lee, performed by Ten Years After; "Younger Generation" by and performed by John Sebastian; "Soul Sacrifice" by Carlos Santana, Gregg Rolie, José Areas, Mike Carabello, David Brown, Michael Shrieve, performed by Santana; "I Want to Take You Higher" by Sylvester Stewart, performed by Sly and the Family Stone; "Purple Haze", "Instrumental Improvisations", "Voodoo Chile" by Jimi Hendrix, "Woodstock" by Joni Mitchell, "The Star Spangled Banner" (traditional), performed by Jimi Hendrix; "McStep Blues", "Try" by and performed by Jefferson Airplane; "Work Me Lord" by Nicholas Gravenites, performed by Janis Joplin
Restoration Sound Supervisor
L. A. Johnson
Sound and Music
Larry Johnson
Documentary Sound
Larry Johnson
Bruce Perlman
Charlie Pitts
Charles Groesbeek
Joe Louw
Sound Engineer
Lee Osborne
Restoration Re-Recording Mixer
Greg P. Russell
Music Mixer
Dan Wallin
Dolby stereo consultant:
Douglas Greenfield
Dubbing Supervisor
Graham Lee Mahin
Research/Restoration Supervisor
Bill Rush

Featuring:
Joan Baez
Canned Heat
Joe Cocker
Country Joe and the Fish
Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young
Arlo Guthrie
Richie Havens
Jefferson Airplane
Jimi Hendrix
Janis Joplin
Santana
John Sebastian
Sha-Na-Na
Sly and the Family Stone
Ten Years After
The Who

20,168 feet
224 minutes

Original Running Time
184 minutes
Dolby stereo
In colour
Technicolor

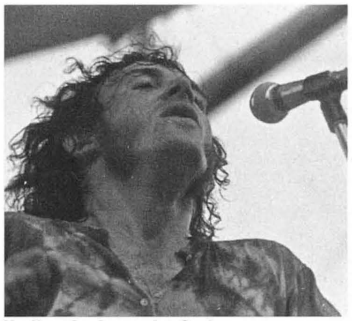
Original Title:
Woodstock

In promo literature, Michael Wadleigh has been claiming that present-generation pop – he cites Nirvana – has at last swung back to the unvarnished realism of the Woodstock moment. The original movie came out in 1970: Jimi Hendrix and Janis Joplin and 'the 60s' all died that year. When Kurt Cobain of Nirvana committed suicide earlier this year, his mother, as everyone now knows, lambasted him for ignoring her and joining them in what she had called "that stupid club". One thing the Unrepentant Hippie's Cut of *Woodstock* can do is retrospectively sanctify. Jimi and Janis are now recast, as the twin spirits of the event, the movie and the age.

In the midst of Hendrix's closing set, mostly shot in tight focus on his guitar fingers, the camera sneaks a look back from the stage to the audience (as has also happened during other performances). This reverse shot breaks with narrative continuity. We see not the massed mudstruck gazing back at us, but a suddenly bare, torn hillside: aftermath of Pop Festival as Civil War battle; Jimi's intimation of all mortality. "The show is over," as Vassily Rozanov put it long ago. "The audience get up to leave their seats. Time to collect their coats and go home. They turn around... no more coats and no more home." This jump-cut alone accords with Nirvana's staggeringly bleak nihilism.

But the brutalised rage of today's pop culture is quite out of sympathy with everything else. This is a film in which every song, every interview, every shot, is still a beatification of impracticality; it is a film unable, though visibly haunted by Vietnam (alien insect-copters permanently a-hover), to face up to its subject's necessary impermanence. It is, as it always was, a triumph of editing (by Thelma Schoonmaker and Martin Scorsese) and of after-the-fact 'scripting'. The fact that – like the Festival itself – the movie scrambled together something memorable out of disaster, was extrapolated into visions of a brave, reshaped future for society.

It is memorable, and it is moving. It's more gripping than you expect: it doesn't feel nearly four hours long. Even when it's boring – Alvin Lee's Ten Years After, come on home – it's not boring (the triple-screen visuals are searingly exciting). Brilliant framing stylisation of certain performances enable three and a half days of footage to be concentrated, so that particular performers star in a mini-drama of the counterculture's chance to change



No direction home: Joe Cocker

things. Joan Baez, alone in a pool of blackness, rain puddling on the stage near her, sings 'Swing Low Sweet Chariot' and 'Joe Hill' ("an *organising* song," she calls it – this a dig?): it becomes the political-moral centre of the film. The Who, just tipping off into the rise and rise of *Tommy*, stand for rock's aesthetic possibility, its chaotic power, its pretentious overreach.

There's more footage of Jimi, consolidating him as the languid, blazing seer who sees through mere spectacle to the death's-head that mocks all. There's all-new footage of Janis, desperate, confused, unprotected, of all the performers the one most 'of' the audience, with most to gain from freedoms that seem to have been won, and haven't.

Not all the recut footage is to the point. Some acts are included for fact's sake only. Jefferson Airplane, their time done, the movement grown beyond them, could have stayed omitted without loss. A little Canned Heat goes a long way. The footage of Crosby, Stills, Nash and Young still lacks any image of Neil Young. John Fogerty has refused the director and the public any hint of Creedence Clearwater Revival's attendance. We still have to make do with Sha-Na-Na's ever-awful 'doo-wop' revival. The camera lingers too long now on skinny-dipping kids, marvelling that such things could come to pass, and misreading them.

If Richard Nixon can be rehabilitated, why not Woodstock? *The Director's Cut* – remixed! remastered! restored! – has not excised the original's complacency: belief that this festival changed things (John Sebastian blathering about raising his kids right) feels edged out by belief that things never change. The recut movie closes, post-credits, with a scrolling digital list of those now dead, from John Lennon down to a Grateful Dead keyboard player, not lost but gone before: never-ending roll-call of the 60s departed, self-righteous, self-assured, still claiming all attention, still suffocating all futures.

But the festival's 'real stars' have been allowed back in. Folks from the crowd explain themselves incoherently: multi-racial, happily bedraggled, less hairy than you recall, they remind you that this was a Children's Crusade, no more. Queuing, calling home, patiently waiting, their innocent yattering is as quaint with age as a sepia photo; all that's disagreeable about it is our knowledge of the violence that will in the years to come be mobilised against it.

Mark Sinker

video

Mark Kermode and Peter Dean highlight their ten video choices of the month, and overleaf review, respectively, the rest of the rental and retail releases

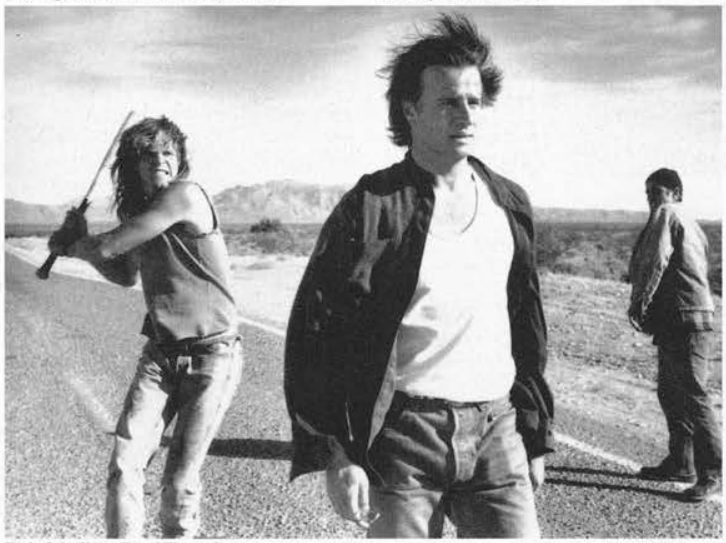
VIDEO CHOICE

Road Flower

Director Deran Sarafian/USA 1993

Although scriptwriter Ted Sarafian's story about a 'civilised' family who are terrorised by in-bred maniacs from the American South is not original (see *Deliverance, The Texas Chain Saw Massacre, Southern Comfort*), and nor is leading man Christopher Lambert's transformation from repressed townie to marauding angel of vengeance, Deran Sarafian's nail-biting direction is unique. The director also makes the audience care about the characters (both goodies and baddies) who are trapped in an unravelling nightmare. From the father's gruelling demise in a burning car to the casual clubbing of a baddie by one of his cohorts, the deaths (which are visually discreet) are plain nerve-racking. The sympathetic performances from Shelley, Sheffer and young Noah Fleiss (seen recently in *Josh and S.A.M.*) deserve special mention.

● Rental: EV EVV 1290; Certificate 18; 86 minutes; Producers John Flock, Lance Hool; Screenplay Ted Sarafian; Lead Actors Christopher Lambert, Craig Sheffer, David Arquette, Adrian Shelley, Noah Fleiss



End of the line: 'Road Flower'

The Hour of the Pig

Director Leslie Megahey/UK/France 1993

In a remote village in medieval France a pig (owned by neighbouring gypsies) is tried for the murder of a young Jewish boy. While investigating the case a young, idealistic lawyer, Courtois (Colin Firth), uncovers a plot to protect the real culprit. The lawyers squabble among themselves, unaware that a more apocalyptic judgment waits beyond the borders of the town. Partly inspired by historical events (animals really were subject to criminal trials), director and scriptwriter Leslie Megahey's ghoulish romp masterfully juggles humour and horror as he takes pot-shots at the church, the state and the law. Donald Pleasence is superb as Pincheon, Courtois' legal adversary, and Ian Holm and Nicol Williamson lend acerbic support. A full-blooded, bawdy British farce with chilling undertones. (S&S February 1994)

● Rental: Curzon CV 0045; Certificate 15



A medieval whodunnit: 'The Hour of the Pig'



Dazzling Altman: 'Short Cuts'

Short Cuts

Director Robert Altman/USA 1993

Short Cuts (based on the writings of Raymond Carver) is a dazzling piece of work – a complex, intricate and rich revelation of everyday human truths. In a pestilential Los Angeles a disparate group of characters, whose paths fleetingly cross, endure the traumas of modern life. Altman directs the cast with orchestral precision. Although a widescreen print would be preferable, this full-frame version is still well worth a look. (S&S March 1994)

● Rental: Artificial Eye A905; Certificate 18



Madeleine Stowe: 'Blink'

Blink

Director Michael Apted/USA 1994

Although based on a preposterous premise – a blind woman has an eye operation which enables her to see things after they happen – Michael Apted's twisty thriller succeeds on the level of sheer entertainment. Madeleine Stowe is terrific as the visually challenged heroine who may or may not be a witness to a gruesome murder. Dana Stevens' screenplay is gripping all the way to the risible dénouement and Apted manages to inject an air of realism into the fantastical proceedings. (S&S June 1994)

● Rental: Guild G8762; Certificate 18

Someone's Watching

Director Scott McGinnis/USA 1993

An affecting, latterday *film noir* homage with more class than the tacky sleeve would suggest. After receiving a mysterious phone call from a deceased girlfriend, down-at-heel snoop Tim Daly becomes involved with a shady beauty with a deadly secret. McGinnis and cinematographer Christian Sebaldt create an authentic air of dark, brooding intrigue as Daly becomes trapped in the inevitable double-crosses. Virginia Madsen adds star appeal in an audacious, uncredited cameo, sporting a gothic-black fright-wig and a rouge lipstick sneer as the archetypal bitch.

● Rental: Columbia TriStar; Certificate 18; 88 minutes; Producer Mike Elliot; Screenplay Travis Rink; Lead Actors Tim Daly, Mia Sarah, Virginia Madsen, Judd Nelson



Dancing to forget: Bergman's 'Summer Interlude'

Summer Interlude (Sommarlek)

Director Ingmar Bergman/Sweden 1950

Before a rehearsal of *Swan Lake*, Mari, a famous ballerina, spends an afternoon at her uncle's lakeside mansion where she first fell in love during an idyllic summer holiday. Through flashbacks, Bergman shows Mari going through an emotional death and rebirth – echoing her role in Tchaikovsky's ballet – and warns against living in the past. As with his later film *Summer with Monika* (see review this page), the director sets love and happiness in a rural surrounding, while the city represents grim reality, faded memories and despair. Symbolism plays an important role in the film, with portents of doom surrounding the blissfully happy lovers. Equally striking is the *mise en scène* and the stark contrast of images – all of which are aided by the superb quality of the print. Aka *Illicit Interlude*. (MFB No. 311)

● Retail: Tartan Video TVT 1067; Price £15.99; B/W; Subtitles; Certificate PG

Summer with Monika (Sommaren med Monika)

Director Ingmar Bergman/Sweden 1952

Bergman's lyrical tale of young love begins with a touch of spring in the air and ends with a snap of frost. A delivery boy, Harry Lund (Lars Ekborg), falls for a wild, greengrocer's assistant called Monika (Harriet Andersson). The couple run away on his father's motor boat and spend the summer on Sweden's inland waterways. Their freedom is brought to a halt after Monika discovers she is pregnant and begins to steal food, with disastrous results. The lovers return to the reality of Stockholm, where the walls close in on their romance. The movie's portrayal of lovers rebelling against society and the scenes with free-spirited Monika in her element are glorious, while Gunnar Fischer's cinematography captures the stark beauty of the landscape. Aka *Monika*. (MFB No. 301)

● Retail: Tartan Video TVT 1082; Price £15.99; B/W; Subtitles; Certificate PG



Free love: Harriet Andersson, Lars Ekborg in 'Summer with Monika'



A genius for animation: 'Aladdin'

Aladdin

Directors John Musker/Ron Clements/USA 1992

In the early 80s Disney ventured into more adult territory in order to reach a broader audience who were put off by Disney's wholesome image. *Aladdin* is the first of the new animation films which appears to be self-consciously doing the same thing. Robin Williams' virtuoso comedy performance as the voice of the genie is central to the film's cross-over attraction, with the animation complimenting the speed and vagaries of his delivery. It was a brave decision to use Williams, but it works – young children may get lost when he's in full flight, but for older viewers he is a treat. Partly because of the delay between its UK and US release, *Aladdin* was one of the most pirated videos last year – but, if you own a bootleg copy, it is worth splashing out on the technically superior genuine article. The colours are first rate, especially in the Arabian skies and the 'cave of wonders' in which Aladdin finds the lamp. (S&S December 1993)

● Retail: Walt Disney Classics D216622; Price £15.99; Certificate U

Liebelei

Director Max Ophüls/Germany 1932

In Vienna in 1910, two lovers, Christine and Lieutenant Fritz, are caught in the maelstrom of fate when Fritz's recently finished affair with a Baroness is complicated by the arrival of her vengeful husband. Ophüls makes excellent use of the claustrophobic expressionistic sets and lighting, contrasting them with snow-covered location shots against which the young couple declare their undying love. The affair between the flirtatious Mitzi and Fritz's best friend Theo is nicely observed, as is the final duel which is conducted off-screen. The film is beautiful to look at, and the director's use of camera movement and music (for example Beethoven's *Fifth Symphony* when Christine discovers the fate of her lover) highlights the pessimistic romanticism. (MFB No. 190)

● Retail: Art House AHC 7005; Price £15.99; B/W; Subtitles; Certificate U



Ill-fated: 'Liebelei'



What's in a name? 'The Falls'

The Falls

Director Peter Greenaway/UK 1980

Greenaway is at his irreverent, conceited and playful best in this brilliantly funny three hour folly set in Britain sometime in the future. The survivors of the "Violent Unknown Event (VUE)" speak imaginary languages and have developed a close affinity with birds. The film's structure is composed of 92 fictional mini-documentaries which look at a cross-section of people chosen at random from the phone book – all with surnames that have the prefix 'Fall'. *The Falls*' analytical structure and subject matter presage the director's later work – in particular, *A Zed & Two Noughts*, with its similar themes of mortality and bestiality. The film took five years to make, and the research and collating of material is mind-boggling. Sitting through *The Falls* in one session can be hard work, so take Greenaway's advice from the sleeve notes and fast-forward or watch it over several viewings. (MFB No. 565)

● Retail: Connoisseur Video CR 157; Price £15.99; Certificate PG

Reviews in Monthly Film Bulletin and Sight and Sound are cited in parentheses. A retail video that has previously been reviewed in the rental section will be listed only and the film review reference given. The term 'Premiere' refers to a film that has had no prior UK theatrical release and is debuting on video. 🗨 denotes closed captioning facility

Rental

A Bronx Tale
Director Robert De Niro; USA 1994; PolyGram PG 1019; Certificate 18
Despite a tendency towards melodramatic overstatement (inherent in Chazz Palminteri's screenplay), De Niro's directorial debut has much to recommend it. Young Lillo Brancato carries the piece as a New York kid torn between allegiance to his father and the paternal lure of the glamorous world of crime. (S&S March 1994)

Deadly Advice
Director Mandie Fletcher; UK 1994; Curzon CV 0045; Certificate 15
Unfunny black comedy which is both dreary and tasteless. A dowdy waif (Jane Horrocks) is visited by visions of infamous murderers who teach her to be more assertive. John Mills' role as a 'lovable' Jack the Ripper is particularly inappropriate. (S&S May 1994)

Free Willy
Director Simon Wincer; USA 1993; Warner V012965; Certificate U
With a theme tune by Michael Jackson and the tag-line "How far would you go for a friend?", how could this be anything but awful? A young boy befriends and sets free a performing whale. (S&S March 1994) 🗨

Heaven & Earth
Director Oliver Stone; USA 1993; Warner V012983; Certificate 15
The weakest of Stone's Vietnam trilogy (*Platoon*, *Born on the Fourth of July*), based on two books by Le Ly Hayslip, chronicles an Asian woman's marriage to a US marine. Although the war scenes are suitably realistic, Stone's talent shines in the depiction of Le Ly's amazement at her new American home. The sequence where she frolics in a gigantic mall is both powerful and witty. (S&S March 1994) 🗨

Mother's Boys
Director Yves Simoneau; USA 1993; Guild G8759; Certificate 15
Turgid horror fare lacking narrative tension, surprises and logic. A disturbed mother (Jamie Lee Curtis) resolves to get back her estranged husband and children by any means necessary. Hysterical screaming and little else. (S&S May 1994)

Painted Heart
Director Michael Taav; USA 1992; Tartan Video TVT 1167; Certificate 18
A sprightly, dark satire which (like the work of the Coen Brothers and David Lynch) uncovers bizarre secrets beneath the tranquil surface of small-town America. House-painter-cum-serial killer Willie (Robert Pastorelli) unwittingly presides over a putative affair between his wife Margaret (Bebe Neuwirth) and his employee Wes (Will Patton). Michael Taav's script of murder, passion and paint is endearingly brought to life by the cast. (S&S May 1994)

The Remains of the Day
Director James Ivory; UK/USA 1993; Columbia TriStar CVT 19665; Certificate U
A powerful adaptation of Kazuo Ishiguro's novel which benefits from Emma Thompson's Oscar-winning performance and Anthony Hopkins' perfect portrayal of English repression. Far superior to the usual Merchant-Ivory adaptations. (S&S December 1993) 🗨

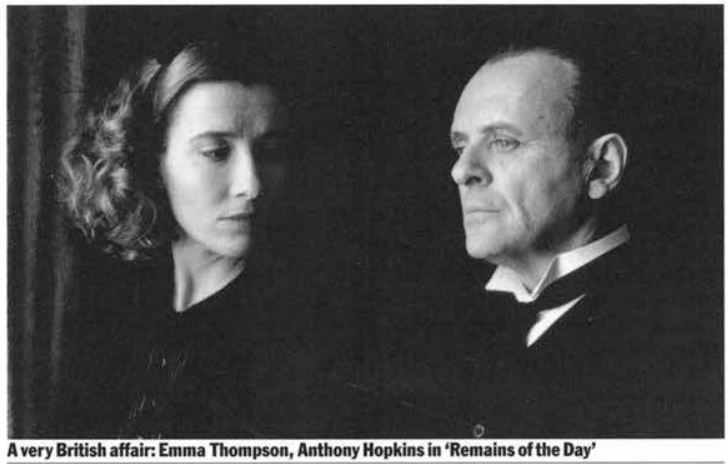
The Saint of Fort Washington
Director Tim Hunter; USA 1993; FoxVideo 8642; Certificate 15
Matt Dillon and Danny Glover notch up brownie points in their portrayal of down-and-outs, but Tim Hunter's golden-hearted tale of homelessness is less than riveting. Urban depravity and the rigours of poverty are ably evoked but the dewy-eyed romanticism blunts the impact. (S&S June 1994)

The Three Musketeers
Director Stephen Herek; USA 1993; Hollywood D141972; Certificate PG
This *Young Guns*-style teen offering is made palatable thanks to the visual panache of Stephen Herek and the marvellously fiendish presence of Tim Curry. Even Charlie Sheen and Kiefer Sutherland come out smelling of roses. (S&S March 1994) 🗨

Tombstone
Director George P. Cosmatos; USA 1993; EV EVV 1275; Certificate 15
An upbeat Western set in 1879 Arizona, which celebrates the genre rather than unearthing unpalatable truths about the old West. Kurt Russell and Val Kilmer are engaging as Wyatt Earp and Doc Holliday. William A. Fraker's widescreen photography loses much of its majesty in the transfer to video. (S&S March 1994)

Rental premiere

Alien Intruder
Director Richard Jacques Gale; USA 1992; Imperial Entertainment IMP 148; Certificate 15; 91 minutes; Producers Joseph Merhi, Richard Pepin; Screenplay Nick Stone; Lead Actors Maxwell Caulfield, Tracy Scoggins, Gary Roberts, Richard Cody
Tame extra-terrestrial nonsense which fails to live up to the promise of its sub-*Westworld* premise. A group of convicts, enticed by the virtual reality recreation room in which they can indulge their wildest sexual fantasies, agree to a deadly space mission. They all end up dreaming of dreary Tracy Scoggins who turns out to be a marauding alien.


A very British affair: Emma Thompson, Anthony Hopkins in 'Remains of the Day'

Arctic Blue
Director Peter Masterson; Canada 1993; EV EVV 1289; 91 minutes; Certificate 15; Producer Rick Stevenson; Screenplay Ross Lamanna; Lead Actors Rutger Hauer, Dylan Walsh, Rya Kihlstedt
This feisty thriller is aided by the visually alluring Alaskan setting (full of impressive snowscapes) and Rutger Hauer doing what he does best (playing a madman). Environmental do-gooders Walsh and Kihlstedt learn the true nature of the wild after confronting a marauding gang of redneck poachers led by the enigmatic Ben Corbett (Hauer).

Babewatch
Director Valerie Breiman; USA 1993; Columbia TriStar CVT 21671; Certificate 18; 84 minutes; Producer Christian Halsey Solomon; Screenplay Clark Kent; Lead Actors Lucky O. Boyle, J.C. Palermo, Becca Rocheford, Clayton Halsey, Rif Coogan
Dreadful tits 'n' bums humour. The film-makers do not seem to be aware that the TV series *Baywatch* is already a limp parody of itself. The publicity promises "raw sex" and "erotic comedy", but the film fails to raise a laugh, let alone an erection.

Dark Tide
Director Luca Bercovici; USA 1993; Hi-Fliers HFV 8268; Certificate 18; 89 minutes; Producers Natan Zahavi, Sam Bernard; Screenplay Sam Bernard, Robert I. Levy; Lead Actors Chris Sarandon, Richard Tyson, Brigitte Bako
A sophisticated underwater enthusiast (Chris Sarandon) and his youthful girlfriend (Bako) invoke the wrath of muscular tropical islanders when Bako arouses their animal passions. Lacking the claustrophobic tension and narrative thrust of *Voyage*, this fails to exploit the potential of its exotic sea-bound setting. Sarandon is none the less engaging and the production is glossy.


Bizarre secrets: 'Painted Heart'

Fatal Instinct
Director Carl Reiner; USA 1993; Warner VO 53944; Certificate 15; 86 minutes; Producers Katie Jacobs, Pierce Gardner; Screenplay David O'Malley; Lead Actors Armand Assante, Sherilyn Fenn, Kate Nelligan, Sean Young
It may seem facile to take parodic pot-shots at erotic thrillers, but David O'Malley's addition to the burgeoning post-*Airplane* spoof genre manages to hit its target. From *Body Heat* to *Basic Instinct*, O'Malley stacks up the in-jokes. Sean Young is perfectly cast as the over-the-top *femme fatale*, and only Reiner's plodding direction lets things down. 🗨

Fortunes of War
Director Thierry Notz; USA 1993; 20.20 Vision NVT 22457; Certificate 15; 102 minutes; Producer Matt Salinger; Screenplay Mark Lee; Lead Actors Matt Salinger, Michael Ironside, Haing S. Noor, Michael Nouri, Martin Sheen
Run-of-the-mill *Killing Fields*-style thriller written by former war correspondent Mark Lee. An aid worker stationed in Cambodia becomes trapped in an operation to smuggle medical supplies to the Khmer Rouge.

Ghoulies IV
Director Jim Wynorski; USA 1993; Warner VO 35804; Certificate 18; 89 minutes; Producer Gary Schmoeller; Screenplay Mark Sevi; Lead Actors Peter Liapis, Barbara Alyn Woods, Stacie Randall
The first *Ghoulies* (a poor copy of *Critters*) stretched out the jokes, so it's hardly surprising that in this sequel the humour has worn unbearably thin. On the side of the good guys, the rubber puppet dwarves frolic their way through more tiresome japes. The most shocking (and amusing) aspect is the BBFC's 18 certificate.

Gunmen
Director Deran Sarafian; USA 1992; Columbia TriStar CVT 16858; Certificate 18; 93 minutes; Producers Laurence Mark, John Davis, John Flock; Screenplay Stephen Sommers;

PRIVATE VIEW

'Distant Voices' producer Jennifer Howarth on 'The Terence Davies Trilogy'

The child within

In 1977, as new students at the National Film School, the first thing we had to do was watch one another's films. The slight, diffident and very polite man sitting next to me appeared to be doubled-up with shyness and apprehension. Oh dear, I thought, I bet he has made a tentative film. A few moments later *Children* (for my fellow student was Terence Davies) slammed out of the screen with such power, intensity and passion that no one at the school could see Terence in the same way again.

Shot in stark black and white, with uncompromising honesty, the only films I had seen that were at all similar were Bill Douglas' trilogy *My Childhood, My Ain Folk* and *My Way Home*. *Children* – like the two earlier Douglas films – conveyed the pain and bewilderment of a powerless childhood and, as with Douglas, Davies had been discovered by the then head of the BFI Production Board, Mamoun Hassan. Terence wrote *Children* while a mature student at drama school in Coventry, and sent the script off into the blue. Mamoun summoned Terence to London: "I shall give you £8,500 to make this film and not a penny more." "Who's going to direct it?" Terry asked. "You are," was the reply. Mamoun (who became one of our mentors at the school, and with whom we laughed so much at a screening of *Kind Hearts and Coronets* that Terence fell off his stool) had recognised that the precision and intensity of the images in Terence's writing revealed a potential film director of distinction.

A novice behind the camera, (the eye-line match rule was a mystery to him), Terence wanted *Children* to look like a Vermeer, and with this in mind he embarked on a collaboration with Bill Diver as lighting cameraman – a partnership which continued for the next five films, with Bill sometimes cutting, sometimes lighting and on *Distant Voices* (with special union dispensation) doing both. Even then it was obvious that *Children* was the work of a mature film-maker and that his role at the film school was one of consolidating and refining his talent. While the rest of us were playing around trying to find our voice and talent, Terence moved immediately on to *Madonna and Child*. He was always clear that this film would form the second part of a trilogy. Thus, remarkably, *Madonna and Child* was made as a student film. After watching a cut of *Madonna* with visiting tutor Alexander Mackendrick I remember somebody asking him, "Is it a gay film?". "It's the least gay 'gay' film I've ever seen," was the reply.

Certain moments in *Madonna and Child* are possibly the bravest and most exceptional sequences to have been made at the film school. In particular the scenes set in a mens' lavatory and the track across the church and around the stations of the cross which are accompanied by the voice-over of the tattooist, have immense power to shock, disturb and arouse compassion. The acting is exquisite and I cannot write of Terry Sullivan's performance without my eyes filling with tears.



Angels and demons: 'Death and Transfiguration', the third part of Terence Davies' trilogy

When Terence left the school, like most of us he had very little money, but he persevered in trying to make the third part of his trilogy. I think this final film, *Death and Transfiguration*, is the most remarkable achievement. The finance for the project was raised in dribs and drabs – Maureen McCue of Greater London Arts gave her entire minuscule film budget, and people worked on the project for the love of it. Wilfrid Brambell was persuaded to play the dying Robert Tucker, giving a moving, dignified performance. "Take your teeth out, Wilfrid," Terry asked, and, surprisingly and appropriately, Brambell did. With admirable tenacity and self-sacrifice Terence managed to shoot the film, with the BFI stepping in at the end like a good fairy to provide finishing costs and to distribute it.

I remember seeing a cut of *Death and Transfiguration* and being stunned by the opening sequence – a wide-shot of the Liverpool sky, the radiator of Tucker's mother's hearse, Tucker's hands folded quietly, the wheels of the funeral cars with their shining hub caps, Tucker's grief-stricken face, the crematorium gates as the cortege drives in, the furnace doors closing on the coffin and its lonely wreath – the images cut to Doris Day singing *It All Depends on You*.

The trilogy did the rounds of the international festival circuits and was often seen – in the States in particular – as an unnecessarily pessimistic piece, receiving limited arthouse distribution as a result. In a 'glad to be gay' climate, the insecurity, guilt and downright loneliness so astutely expressed in these films was an unfashionable stance. Because Terence dared to show the pain of growing up Catholic and homosexual in working-class Liverpool in the 50s and early 60s, the films were not celebrated enough. Terence once told me that when he recognised his homosexuality he knelt in prayer for so long that his knees bled – this pain is conveyed in the spirit of his films.

Watching the three films again, it seems to me now, as it did in 1983 when I saw the final part, that the trilogy is a triumph, and I feel privileged to have embarked (with colour, 35mm film and slightly more money) on *Distant Voices, Still Lives* in Terence Davies' company.

'The Terence Davies Trilogy' is available on Connoisseur Video

Lead Actors Christopher Lambert, Mario Van Peebles, Dennis Leary, Kadeem Hardison

The second Sarafian/Lambert movie this month (see *Roadflower* in Video Choice) is a pacy action romp with *Hard Way*-style humour. Agent Cole Parker (Van Peebles) teams up with prison escapee Dani Servigo (Lambert) to track a South American drug dealer's ill-gotten gains. Lambert and Van Peebles may be the stars, but it is Sommer's script and Sarafian's direction that steal the show.

Guyver: Dark Hero

Director Steve Wang; USA/Japan 1994; 20.20 Vision NVT 21677; Certificate 15; 100 minutes; Producer Steve Wang; Screenplay Nathan Long; Lead Actors David Hayter, Kathy Christopherson, Christopher Michael

Men in rubber suits perform agile athletic feats in Steve Wang's sequel to *The Guyver* (aka: *Mutronics: The Movie*).

House Party 3

Director Eric Meza; USA 1994; EV EVV 1282; Certificate 15; 90 minutes; Producer Carl Craig; Screenplay Takashi Bufford; Lead Actors Bernie Mac, David Edwards, Angela Means

More of the same from the popular *House Party* series. Play throws a riotous bachelor party to celebrate Kid's forthcoming marriage.

Invisible: The Chronicles of Benjamin Knight

Director Jack Ersgard; USA 1993; CIC Paramount VHB 2908; Certificate 18; 76 minutes; Producers Vlad Panescu, Dana Panescu; Screenplay Earl Kenton; Lead Actors Brian Cousins, Jennifer Nash, Michael Dellafemina, Aharon Ipale

A cheap 'n' cheerful *Memoirs of an Invisible Man* rip-off with latex, hokey special effects and down-market violence. Benjamin Knight and two friends search for a magical substance called 'super-con'.

Money for Nothing

Director Ramon Menendez; USA 1993; Hollywood D923132; Certificate 15; 96 minutes; Producer Tom Musca; Screenplay Ramon Menendez, Tom Musca, Carol Sobieski; Lead Actors John Cusack, Michael Madsen

Unemployed dock worker Joey Coyle (Cusack) hits the jackpot when $1.2 million falls from an armoured truck. Despite the comic potential, Menendez's direction is leaden and graceless.

Open Fire

Director Kurt Anderson; USA 1994; Reflective RE 7020; Certificate 18; 89 minutes; Producers Pierre David, Noel A. Zanitsch; Screenplay Thomas Ritz; Lead Actors Jeff Wincott, Patrick Kilpatrick, Mimi Craven, Arthur Taxier

Endearing muscle-man Jeff Wincott gets little chance to show off in this chemical plant-bound *Die Hard* rehash. Terrorists threaten to swamp LA with toxic slime unless their leader is released. Unlike his role in the enjoyable *Martial Outlaw*, Wincott has to play it straight – fighting only one or two men at a time (as opposed to 20) – and there are no fancy costumes.

Royce

Director Rod Holcomb; USA 1994; ITC 8703; Certificate 15; 94 minutes; Producer J. Boyce Hartman Jnr; Screenplay Paul Bernbaum; Lead Actors James Belushi, Chelsea Field, Miguel Ferrer, Peter Boyle

By-numbers action thriller. Secret agent Shane Royce (James Belushi) tracks a group of renegade CIA agents hell-bent on hi-jacking Russian warheads.

Retail

The Assassin (US title: The Point of No Return)
Director John Badham; USA 1993; Warner SO12819; Price £13.99; Certificate 18
(S&S July 1993)

Baby on Board
Director Francis A. Schaeffer; USA 1992; First Independent V3402; Price £10.99; Certificate PG
(S&S Video April 1993)

The Birth of a Nation
Director D. W. Griffith; USA 1915; Connoisseur Video CR 150; Price £15.99; B/W; Silent; Certificate 15
After being delayed by the censors, Griffith's controversial masterpiece is finally released on video (see Wind Up July 1994). Based on *The Clansman*, Thomas Dixon Jnr's book about the American civil war, the film contrasts two families – the Stonemans of the North and the Camerons of the South. The battle sequences are splendidly staged, as are historical pageants such as the assassination of President Lincoln. (MFB No. 544)

Chronicle of a Summer (Chronique d'un été)
Directors Jean Rouch/Edgar Morin; France 1961; Academy CAV 015; Price £15.99; B/W; Subtitles; Certificate U
Rouch's reputation as a master of *cinéma vérité* fails to enliven this documentary about Parisians circa 1960. The film's heavy-handedness is partly due to Rouch's desire to not "record life as it is but life as it is provoked." The project was suggested by Edgar Morin with the intention of making a "social fresco" about the city during the summer when it seemed the Algerian war was coming to an end. (MFB No. 343)

Cinema Paradiso: The Special Edition (Nuovo Cinema Paradiso)
Director Giuseppe Tornatore; Italy/France 1989; Tartan Video TVT 1171; Price £21.95; Subtitles; Certificate PG
Extended version of the arthouse hit about a boy who spends all his time at the local cinema. The restored cuts – mostly in the latter half – clarify the plot, explaining, for example, why Salvatore's girlfriend leaves for Rome. The special edition conveys a greater sense of bitterness and irony, but at almost three hours it seems too long. (S&S February 1994)

Coneheads
Director Steve Barron; USA 1993; Paramount VHR 2788; Price £10.99; Certificate PG
(S&S Video March 1994)

Cop and a Half
Director Henry Winkler; USA 1993; Universal VHR 1653; Price £10.99; Certificate PG
(S&S July 1993)

La Crise
Director Coline Serreau; France 1992; Electric Pictures EPOO 62; Price £15.99; Subtitles; Certificate 15
Serreau tries to recreate the feel-good charm of her earlier film *Romuald et Juliette*, casting *Romuald*'s lead Vincent Lindon as a hapless man who loses almost everything – including his job and wife – and sets out on a journey of self-discovery accompanied by an irritating social misfit (Patrick Timsit). The farce is very Gallic, the racial themes seem forced and the ending is disappointing. (S&S March 1994)

Daens
Director Stijn Coninx; Belgium/France/Netherlands 1992; Curzon CV 0043; Price £15.99; Subtitles; Certificate 15
Jan Decleir gives a fine performance as Adolf Daens, a nineteenth-century priest who becomes a thorn in the side of the wealthy mill owners in his town when he decides to fight the poverty of the working class. The accusation that *Daens* is politically simplistic should not detract from what is a magnificently mounted epic, well-played and with its heart in the right place. (S&S April 1994)

Dennis
Director Nick Castle; USA 1993; Warner SO 12803; Price £13.99; Certificate PG
(S&S September 1993)

Domicile Conjugal (Bed and Board)
Director François Truffaut; France/Italy 1970; Artificial Eye ART 076; Price £15.99; Subtitles; Certificate PG
The fourth and penultimate film in Truffaut's semi-autobiographical Antoine Doinel series suffers from being self-consciously cute. Antoine works his way through a series of bizarre jobs – dyeing carnations, operating radio-controlled oil tankers – while his wife has their first child. The film loses its light touch when Antoine falls for a Japanese woman. Stylish, but not as successful as the earlier films. (MFB No. 451)

El Mariachi
Director Robert Rodriguez; USA 1992; Columbia TriStar CVR 29871; Price £10.99; Subtitles; Certificate PG
(S&S September 1993)

Fatherland
Director Ken Loach; UK/West Germany 1985; Channel 4 VA 30407; Price £12.99; English language/Subtitles; Certificate 15
Capitalism and the music business are wryly observed in the first half of Loach's film about a celebrated East German songwriter Klaus Dritterman arriving in the West. However, Dritterman's search for his defected father steers the film towards thriller territory, making Loach's docu-drama style seem inappropriate. (MFB No. 638)

Hard-Boiled (Lashou Shentan)
Director John Woo; Hong Kong 1992; Tartan Video TVT 1172; Price £10.99; Certificate 18
In gang-ridden Hong Kong a cop seeks revenge for the death of his partner, while his criminal counterpart – a hired assassin – tries to escape from his world of organised crime. A thread of symbolism runs through the film, with the characters portrayed as caged birds unable to escape even when offered the chance to fly. Unfortunately, Woo overdoses on the action leaving you wishing for more character development and dialogue. This is the pan-and-scan dubbed version – wait three months for the widescreen subtitled release. (S&S October 1993)

House of Cards
Director Michael Lessac; USA 1992; First Independent V3407; Price £10.99; Certificate 15
(S&S Video September 1993)


People's revolution: 'Daens'

Iron Maze
Director Hiroaki Yoshida; USA/Japan1991; First Independent V3408; Price £10.99; Certificate 15
(S&S December 1991)

It Happened Here
Directors Kevin Brownlow/Andrew Mollo; UK 1956; Connoisseur Video CR 159; Price £12.99; B/W; Certificate PG
With the help of volunteers, Brownlow and Mollo spent eight years making this low-budget film. The grainy black and white fictionalised newsreel footage adds to the authenticity of this war-time melodrama giving it an occasional chilling reality. The story is built on the premise 'what if the Germans had invaded Britain?'. The infiltration of British life at grass roots level by fascism is carefully observed, as when Nazis are seen on board a London bus, or a policeman makes his rounds with a German soldier.
(MFB No. 389)

Jane Eyre
Director Robert Stevenson; USA 1944; FoxVideo 1247; Price £12.99; Certificate PG
Aldous Huxley was one of three screenwriters to work on this less than faithful, well acted version of Charlotte Brontë's classic novel. Orson Welles (Rochester) and Joan Fontaine (Jane) are magnificent as the tragic couple.
(MFB No. 120)

Laura
Director Otto Preminger; USA 1944; FoxVideo 1094; Price £12.99; B/W; Certificate U
Preminger took over this classic *film noir* and re-shot it after Rouben Mamoulian was fired. Following Laura's death (her face was shot away by a gun), cop Dana Andrews tries to work out whether the murderer was Laura's fiancé (Vincent Price) or her admirer Waldo Lydecker (Clifton Webb). Lydecker in particular is a brillantly realised character – a callous and articulate journalist who types venomous columns in the bath. Excellently written, the film is a study of obsession which seems at first to deconstruct the genre, but then succumbs deliriously to its conventions.
(MFB No. 131)

A Little Night Music
Director Harold Prince; USA/Austria/West Germany 1977; IMC CE0027; Price £10.99; Certificate PG
Influenced by Ingmar Bergman's *Smiles of a Summer Night*, this is a good-looking if leaden adaptation of the Broadway show about sexual dalliances in a country mansion. With music and lyrics by Stephen Sondheim. (MFB No. 586)

Map of the Human Heart
Director Vincent Ward; UK/Australia 1992; Columbia TriStar CVR 23778; Price £10.99; Certificate 15
(S&S June 1993)

My Grandad's a Vampire
Director David Blyth; New Zealand 1992; Medusa MED 13292; Price £10.99; Certificate PG
(S&S Video August 1993)

The Odd Angry Shot
Director Tom Jeffrey; Australia 1979; Art House AHP 5013; Price £12.99; Certificate 18
This downbeat Antipodean answer to *M*A*S*H* takes a familiar anti-war stance. *Don's Party* stars John Hargreaves and Graham Kennedy drink gallons of beer and make the Vietnam war look like a lads' get-together, until an enemy assult on a bridge causes tragedy.
(MFB No. 548)

The Philadelphia Experiment 2
Director Stephen Cornwall; USA 1993; PolyGram 6300463; Price £10.99; Certificate 15
(S&S Video December 1993)

Return of the Evil Dead (El ataque de los muertos sin ojos)
Director Amando de Osorio; Spain 1973; Redemption RETN 037; Price £12.99; Widescreen; Certificate 18
500 years after being executed for cannibalism, the evil Templar Knights return to wreak revenge on a remote Spanish town. Unluckily for Jack Marlowe, the fireworks entrepreneur overseeing the 500th anniversary celebrations, the zombies set out to turn the townsfolk into tapas. Two of the unintentional highlights are the village idiot's dubbed voice (which sounds like Peter Falk) and the half-an-hour-long fireworks display. (MFB No. 513)

Roselyne and the Lions (Roselyne et les lions)
Director Jean-Jacques Beineix; France 1989; Artificial Eye ART 098; Price £15.99; Subtitles; Certificate 15
Two young trainee lion tamers run away, fall in love and land prestigious jobs with the German circus Koenig's of Munich. The in-fighting within the circus, the intrusion by the media on the couple's act and the overblown spectacular finale make more sense if seen in the light of Beineix's claim that the film is a parody of the film industry. (MFB No. 671)


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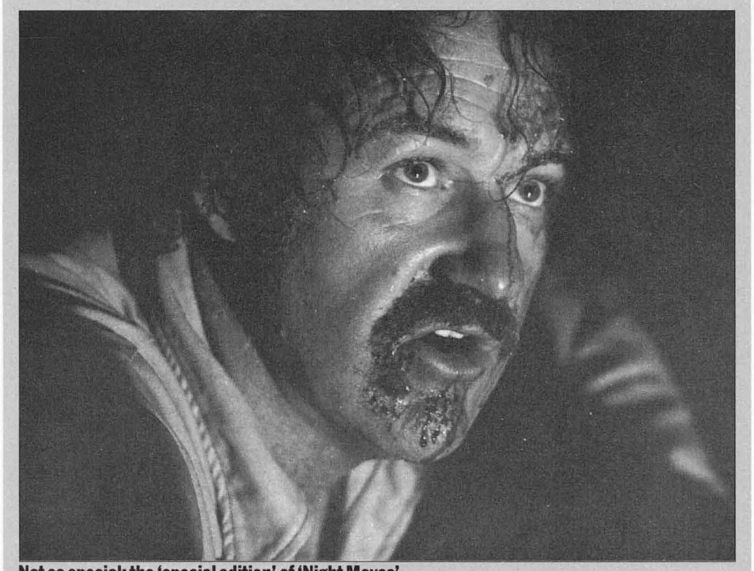
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WIND UP

By Peter Dean



Not so special: the 'special edition' of 'Night Moves'

● In March, Wind Up revealed that 18 months after introducing the excellent Elite Collection, Warner and MGM/UA are upping the price by £3 and in return offering widescreen prints with an original trailer thrown in for good measure. Horror on horror's head, these tapes will now misleadingly be called 'special editions'. A very unspecial panned-and-scanned version of Arthur Penn's superb 1975 *Night Moves*, for example, accompanied by just a trailer, is described as a special edition. According to the companies, "Some will be special because of their rarity." Since Warner owns the rights to *Night Moves*, it's clear who has made it 'rare'.

● Any hopes that the certification conundrum might be sorted out sooner rather than later were extinguished with the onset of the summer recess. It will now be October at least before video distributors and the BBFC's James Ferman know where they stand. The Home Office looks like kicking retrospective assessment into touch, too, although the Home Affairs Committee and Lord Elton both recommended that the law be changed to allow members of the public six months in which to challenge any of the censor's previous video ratings. This provision is already in existence for new ratings and what would have amounted to a witch-hunt for Chucky, Freddy or Jason would simply be unworkable. As Laurie Hall of the Video Standards Committee puts it, "Everyone who has wanted to rent the title will have seen it anyway, and there are 270 million retail cassettes in people's homes. What are they going to do – make them illegal?" Video's own Officer Ripley, Lavinia Carey, head of the distributors' organisation the British Video Association, is not sure that video is out of the woods. "If the Home Office says it's not doing something that doesn't mean it won't." She's been fighting to keep classic war documentaries outside the scope of Lord Birkett's amendment, which is attempting to close the E-rating loophole which allows alleged 'crime-school' videos (how to make explosives and pick locks) to be deemed educational.

● In the 'making hay while the sun shines' department, it was good to see *Reservoir Dogs* on the big screen again. While MPs prattled on about the pros and cons of the videotape, 25 more film prints of "the Tarantino video they dared to ban" were run off to boffo business on the cinema circuits. The advertising copy on the poster? "Never Seen on Video." The Tarantino-penned *True Romance* is also enjoying long legs at the box office thanks to its video ban. The logic, you see, is that on the big screen it doesn't have as much impact on young, impressionable minds because cinema managers never allow under-age customers into the stalls. Never. From the end of this year if the manager of a video shop rents to under-age customers he or she could face a prison sentence.

● The arrival of the 12 video certificate later this year means that one anomaly between big and small screen will finally be ironed out – but don't expect to see *Mrs Doubtfire* creating a major headache for every video shop owner in the land by coming out as a 12-rated movie. The film was rated 12 for cinema, clearly an unpopular rating since a number of local authorities overturned the BBFC's decision and sensibly opened the doors to family audiences. *Mrs Doubtfire* will be a PG-rated video – although Robin Williams' "Mr Wobbly hides his helmet" routine in the restaurant scene has suffered the unkindest cut.

● The superbly tacky Redemption label this month launched an even tackier sister label, Jezebel, kicking off with four 'continental' movies including the controversial *I Am Curious Yellow*. And no, we don't know whether it's going to include *that* scene.... Lumiere, which owns the former Thorn EMI library including the Ealing comedies, is to launch an arthouse label from the 600 French and Spanish language films in its vaults. The label name is Lighthouse, apparently chosen to reflect the arthouse element and the films' "illuminating" qualities. One of the first releases is the Sylvia Kristel slap-and-tickle dirge *La Marge*, which has the "illuminating" quote on its sleeve: "Most erotic role since *Emmanuelle*."

The Secret Garden
Director Agnieszka Holland; USA 1993; Warner SO 12991; Price £13.99; Certificate U
(S&S November 1993)

The Terence Davies Trilogy: Children/Madonna and Child/Death and Transfiguration
Director Terence Davies; UK 1976/1980/1983; Connoisseur Video CR 158; Price £15.99; B/W; Certificate PG
Three short films – *Children*, *Madonna and Child* and *Death and Transfiguration* – chart the life and death of Liverpudlian clerk Robert Tucker, played in the final film with suitable dourness by Wilfrid Brambell. *The Trilogy* is fascinating for enthusiasts of Davies' work – especially in the comparisons that can be drawn with his later films *Distant Voices, Still Lives* and *The Long Day Closes*. But, although Davies' gift for nostalgia and for showing the human soul in turmoil is excellent, how many more films can he make about a sad, lonely Liverpudlian boy who retreats into a matriarchial world? (MFB Nos. 573/609)

Three Men and a Cradle (Trois Hommes et un couffin)
Director Coline Serreau; France 1985; Arrow AV 012; Price £15.99; Subtitles; Certificate PG
The film which inspired the American remake *Three Men and a Baby*. Three bachelors living in a Paris flat have their lives turned upside down when a baby arrives on their doorstep. Fresher, funnier and less sentimental than the Hollywood version. (MFB No. 641)

Vincent: The Life and Death of Vincent Van Gogh
Director Paul Cox; Australia 1987; Art House AHP 5023; Price £15.99; Certificate U
Van Gogh's life and his relationship with his brother Theo is recounted through an epistolary structure. John Hurt's narration conjures up the right amount of emotion in this moving film, finely detailing Van Gogh's separation from the church, his fascination with rural life and his descent into madness. Cox's film is remarkable for its insight into the artist's paintings. (MFB No. 656)

Les Visiteurs
Director Jean-Marc Poiré; France 1993; Arrow AV013R; Price £15.99; Subtitles; Widescreen; Certificate 15
France's most financially successful film is a cross between *Back to the Future* and *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*, with love interest thrown in. As with the German film *Schtonk!*, this is another example of a European comedy failing to transfer to the British context. Twelfth-century knight Godefroy de Montmirail is zapped into the twentieth century while trying to undo a witch's spell which led him to kill his father-in-law. (S&S February 1994)

Voyage
Director John Mackenzie; Italy/UK/Malta 1993; EVS 1116; Price £10.99; Certificate 15
(S&S Video February 1994)

Whispers in the Dark
Director Christopher Crowe; USA 1993; Paramount VHR 2706; Price £10.99; Certificate 18
(S&S Video July 1993)

Woodstock: Three Days of Love and Music: The Director's Cut
Director Michael Wadleigh; USA 1970; Warner SO 13549; 215 minutes; Price £16.99
See this month's film review section

Retail collection

Follow that Dream/Kid Galahad
Directors Gordon Douglas/Phil Carlson; USA 1961/1962; MGM/UA S035812; Price £12.99; Certificate PG
Follow that Dream is an above average Elvis Presley picture in which the King stars as the leader of a ramshackle community under pressure from local authorities to move on. In *Kid Galahad*, Presley plays a boxer involved with the mob, who place bets on his last fight. (MFB Nos. 342/346)

Live a Little, Love a Little/Stay Away, Joe
Director Norman Taurog/Peter Tewksbury; USA 1968; MGM/UA S035767; Price £12.99; Certificate PG
Two more Elvis films. The romance *Live a Little, Love a Little* co-stars Michele Carey determined to catch Presley. *Stay Away, Joe* is an uneventful comedy in which Presley plays a hapless half-Navajo cowboy. (MFB Nos. 535/421)

Retail premiere

The Big Clubs
Director/Producer Joachim Kreck; Germany/Scotland 1974; Academy CAV 014; 65 minutes; Price £12.99; Certificate E
A 39-minute documentary about Glasgow football teams Celtic and Rangers and their socio-political significance. Also included on the tape are two other short films, *The Linesman* and *Special Police Assignment*.

The Judge and the Assassin (Le Juge et l'assassin)
Director Bertrand Tavernier; France 1976; Arrow AV 0011; Price £15.99; Subtitles; Widescreen; Certificate 18; 121 minutes; Producer Unknown; Screenplay Jean Aurenche, Bertrand Tavernier; Lead Actors Michel Galabru, Philippe Noiret, Jean-Claude Brialy
Tavernier uses colourful widescreen-shot vistas and grand scenes full of extras in an attempt to give an epic feel to this complex period melodrama. As in his earlier role in *The Watchmaker of Saint-Paul*, Philippe Noiret plays a man reconsidering his life while trying to understand the motive behind a murder.

Kiss Me Monster (Besame monstrue)
Director Jesus Franco; West Germany/Spain 1967; Redemption RETN 039; Price £12.99; Widescreen; Certificate 18; 75 minutes; Producer Adrian Hoven; Screenplay Jesus Franco, Luis Rwenga; Lead Actors Janine Renaut, Rosana Yanni, Adrian Hoven
Weak 60s comedy spy thriller. Regina and Diane, a globe-trotting striptease act, are paid by a bizarre cult to uncover experiments by a dead professor. The dubbing is poor.

Sadisterotica (Rote Lippen)
Director Jesus Franco; West Germany/Spain 1967; Redemption RETN 035; Price £12.99; Certificate 18; 80 minutes; Producer Adrian Hoven; Screenplay Luis Revenga, Jesus Franco, Lead Actors Janine Renaut, Rosana Yanni, Adrian Hoven
This dull comic-thriller again features Diane and Regina (see above) on the trail of a diabolical tyrant.

letters

Letters are welcome, and should be addressed to the Editor at Sight and Sound, British Film Institute, 21 Stephen Street, London W1P 1PL Facsimile 071 436 2327

Prisoners without trial

From Sally Sampson

As a former BBFC examiner, who resigned from the board 18 months ago, partly out of disquiet at its lack of accountability to the general public, I was glad to read the editorial (S&S August) urging film and video viewers to press the board for more information. But accountability can be a two-way business, as Tom Dewe Mathews' new book *Censored* points out. And those who demand more freedom of information can sometimes be lazy about seeking out sources of information that *are* available. The BBFC's Annual Reports, for example, are published regularly but are rarely mentioned, let alone analysed, by the media; and until recently debates on censorship held at the NFT have been sparsely attended, except by BBFC examiners, most of whom long to be able to discuss censorship issues with informed viewers.

The BBFC enjoys a monopoly position in relation to the video distributors, who are bound by the VRA to submit their tapes for classification (unless they are exempted) to the "designated body". Presumably as a safeguard, a Video Appeals Committee was set up by the board in 1985, but so far very few appeals have been lodged. Under the rules of the committee, the appeals machinery can only be set in motion when the distributor receives in writing from the board notice of its intention to reject a tape, or to classify it in a certain way. Without this written notice, the appeal cannot go ahead, and the distributor's hands are tied.

The half-dozen or more videos, including *Reservoir Dogs*, which are being held in limbo by the board, like prisoners without trial, may or may not be harmful. But they deserve a fair hearing, at which evidence can be called and properly tested, before an appropriate tribunal, in this case the Video Appeals Committee; its members are listed in the BBFC's annual report for 1989.

London W11

Bill Forsyth

From Stephen Volk

I was amazed that, having directed a "$20 million production" for an American studio (S&S August), Bill Forsyth could then say "it doesn't really matter to me that 50 million Americans don't want to go and see my film".

If Mr Forsyth is more happy with the budget and the audience he got for *Gregory's Girl*, then he should stick to that. And leave the $20 million pictures for other directors. Maybe even, God forbid, Americans.

Bradford-on-Avon, Wiltshire

Alive and well

From Gerry O'Hara

I have to say that your rather brusque announcement of my death (Video, S&S July) is somewhat premature. I am alive and well and full of beans! But I am rather intrigued about the source of this scurrilous information. I was "removed" from the movie that became *Tobe Hooper's Night Terrors* but given *The Mummy Lives* to direct instead. A more amusing project, but, alas, taken out of my hands to be re-edited and dubbed by the local butcher. Hooper was lucky – his movie was slashed to 78 minutes – but mine was stretched far beyond its dramatic capabilities. If you have reviewed it yet I would like to know the worst...

London SW10

Mark Kermode replies: Apologies. I misunderstood Robert Englund's (simultaneously translated) explanation of the convoluted genesis of *Night Terrors* at the Dylan Dog Horror Festival in Milan last year. I did indeed review *The Mummy Lives* (S&S July), and I agree with your verdict.

Crying for Evita

From Juan Rattagan

After reading about Oliver Stone's idea of making a film about Eva Perón (S&S August) I feel both sad and surprised that such a director would want to make a movie based on Andrew Lloyd Webber's inaccurate play. Evita's life, like that of her husband General Juan Perón, is controversial enough, but to portray it as it was presented in the stage show is ridiculous. Often Juan Perón is called a dictator (that he sympathised with the European totalitarian regimes of his time is no secret) but we seem to forget that every time he was in power, he had been elected in free and clean elections, voted for by the huge majority of the people, most of whom had never participated in the political life of the country before. No doubt there was an Argentina 'before Perón' and one 'after Perón'; most Argentinians would agree that the latter is a better place to live.

I profoundly disagree with the policies and attitudes of the current president Carlos Menem, but I think I have to give him credit for not allowing the film to be shot on location in Argentina. After Oliver Stone released *Salvador*, few people believed that things in the country itself were much different from the way it was portrayed in the film. I think it is totally unacceptable to make a 'based-on-facts' movie like *Evita* yet give, for instance, a central role to Ernest 'Che' Guevara, when it is clear that they never met.

London E17

Editor's note See 'Business', pages 4-5

Vangelis

From Richard Clews

I enjoyed the excellent article about Vangelis' soundtrack to *Blade Runner* (S&S August). In the piece, Mark Kermode mentions the bootleg version on the Off World label and the confusion over which tracks on the official album are new compositions. As I have been following the progress of this record for years, I thought I'd offer more information.

I managed to get a copy of the bootleg. The design is of an extremely high standard, and the booklet has information about each track, and pictures from scenes cut from the final version of the film (e.g. Deckard's visit to Tyrell's cryogenic chamber – yes, 'Tyrell' was a replicant too!). The album was produced in a limited run of 2,000, and the sound quality is good for a bootleg. There are 18 tracks, as follows: 1. 'Ladd Company Logo' (0:24); 2. 'Main Titles and Prologue' (4:03); 3. 'Los Angeles, November 2019' (1:46); 4. 'Deckard Meets Rachael' (1:29); 5. 'Bicycle Riders' (2:05); 6. 'Memories of Green' (5:39); 7. 'Blade Runner Blues' (10:19); 8. 'Deckard's Dream' (1:12); 9. 'On the trail of Nexus' (5:30); 10. 'If I Didn't Care' (3:03); 11. 'Love Theme' (4:57); 12. 'The Prodigal Son Brings Death' (3:35); 13. 'Dangerous Days' (1:02); 14. 'Wounded Animals' (10:58); 15. 'Tears in Rain' (2:41); 16. 'End Titles' (7:24); 17. 'One More Kiss, Dear' (4:00); 18. 'Trailer and Alternate Main Titles' (1: 39).

There is still some doubt about why Vangelis never released the music in 1982. The recording engineer on the soundtrack, Raine Shine, told me that Vangelis thought the music wouldn't be very good as an album, because most of the tracks are either too long or too short. I wouldn't be surprised if there was the same sort of argument with Ridley Scott, though another of Vangelis' friends told me the whole thing was connected to Warners' ownership of the copyright to the film's score (Vangelis was on the Polydor label at the time).

On the new album, 'Blush Response', 'Wait for Me' and 'Damask Rose' are totally new compositions, recorded this year. 'Main Titles' is a combination of the titles music and the 'Los Angeles 2019' track (on the bootleg) plus new overdubs. 'Rachael's Song' (not used in the film) had new keyboard parts added. The version of the 'End Titles' on the new album is not the full one, which is available only on the bootleg.

I'm sorry all this reads like some sad 'anorak' monologue, but I hope it sheds a bit more light on *Blade Runner*.

Wolverhampton, West Midlands

Cropping for widescreen

From Ray Deahl

The review of *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* (S&S August) discusses its technical restoration but fails to mention the major drawback of its theatrical reissue – that the beauty of its academy-ratio compositions is ruined by cropping for widescreen projection. It reflects badly on the Disney organisation to have allowed this, and it says something about the artistic and cinematic sensitivity of our critics that none of them seems to have noticed.

London EC2

French films on video

From Keith Reader

Your reviewer of *Le Jeune Werther* (Video, S&S August) is incorrect in asserting that Jacques Doillon's film "has not yet received a theatrical release" in the UK. It was shown (briefly) at London's MGM Swiss Centre cinema, passing unnoticed by your own critics as well as by those from *Time Out* and the *Guardian*'s Saturday guide. At a time when many important French films, including the latest from Godard (*Hélas pour moi*) and Rohmer (*L'Arbre, le maire et la médiathèque*) have not found British distribution, such omissions are frustrating. I hope that Tartan or someone else will soon make available on video other Doillon works such as *La Vie de famille* or the extraordinary bisexual love triangle *La Pirate*; he is a director who deserves to be more widely known here.

London N5

Editor's note Le Jeune Werther is reviewed on page 40 of this issue

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